

TIME

THE ISIS TRAP

BY DAVID VON DREHLE

WHY
AMERICA
SHOULD
GO IN

BY MAX BOOT

WHY
AMERICA
SHOULD
STAY OUT

BY KARL VICK



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Editor's Desk

Covering a Global Story



ANALYZING A THREAT AS COMPLEX AND diffuse as ISIS requires a global effort, and so our special report reflects the work of dozens of journalists on three continents with decades of experience reporting on the Middle East.

The project was overseen from London by Europe editor Matt McAllester, who coordinated the work of journalists in Tehran, Baghdad, Amman, Beirut, Cairo, Paris, London, Cape Town and Washington. They examined the regional impact of ISIS; the growing, improvised, unofficial anti-ISIS coalition; and the challenge of confronting the threat without playing into ISIS's hands. Our reporters also reached out by phone and Skype to explore life inside ISIS-controlled territory, and much of that reporting, which David Von Drehle drew on for his cover story, can be read online at time.com/isis.

We invited Max Boot of the Council on Foreign Relations and Karl Vick, our former Jerusalem bureau chief, who is now based in New York City, to argue the case for and against the U.S.'s sending ground troops into the fight. "The hardest thing about confronting a group like ISIS," Karl observes, "is seeing past the fear they delight in projecting to discern the threat it actually presents. But they make dispassion really difficult." The opening photo was taken by Moises Saman, whose helicopter crashed last August while he was on assignment for TIME covering the Yezidis who were besieged by ISIS on Mount Sinjar. That experience has in no way deterred him from returning to the region. "As a photographer from the 9/11 generation," Moises says, "the pull to Iraq is clear, since I see what is happening there now as the latest chapter of a story that started almost 14 years ago."

Nancy Gibbs, EDITOR



LIGHTBOX The image above may look like an abstract painting, but it's actually an aerial view of Western Australia's blue salt fields—captured from 5,000 ft. by Simon Butterworth at the Useless Loop solar salt operation in Shark Bay. The veteran photographer, whose image was nominated for a Sony World Photography Award (winners will be announced on April 23), intentionally takes photos in ways that change how viewers perceive their subjects. To see more stunning shots from SWP Award nominees, visit lightbox.time.com.

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When it's freezing outside, as it has been across much of the U.S. for weeks, it's hard to find a reason to crawl—let alone jump—out of bed. But as science editor Jeffrey Kluger explains at time.com/coldperks, the polar vortex has its positive points. Among them:

1

FEWER WARS

A 2011 study showed a historical link between high temperatures and armed conflict

2

EASIER TO LOSE WEIGHT

It's not a complete solution, but shivering does burn calories

3

LESS CRIME

Snow-drenched Boston, for example, saw a 70% drop in homicides from Jan. 1 to Feb. 8

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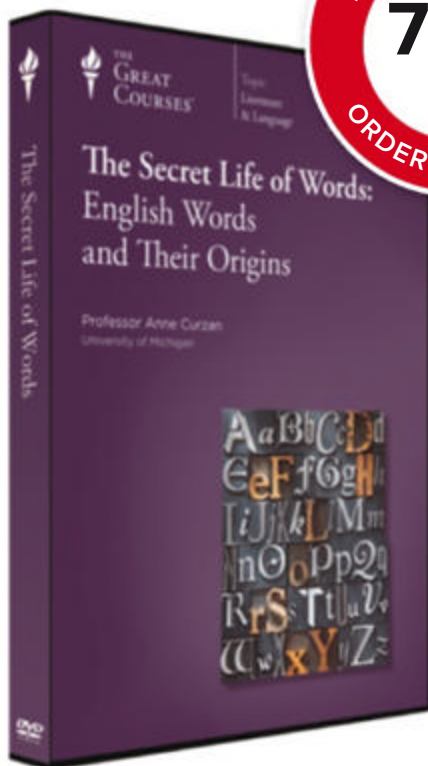


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If it seems as if English is changing all around you, you're right. It's evident in newer words such as "bling" and "email," and from the loss of old forms such as "shall." But does this mean our language is in decay—or is change just the natural order of things? **The Secret Life of Words** answers this question by presenting the fascinating history behind the everyday words in our lexicon.

Award-winning Professor Anne Curzan of the University of Michigan—a member of the American Dialect Society and the *American Heritage Dictionary's* usage panel—approaches the subject like an archaeologist, digging deep below the surface to unearth the remarkable story of English, from its Germanic origins to the rise of globalization and cyber-communications. Packed with surprising insights, these 36 delightful lectures reveal how culture has evolved over the centuries and why there is no such thing as a boring word.

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8. Fighting over Zippers
9. Opening the Early English Word-Hoard
10. Safe and Sound—The French Invasion
11. Magnificent Dexterity—Latin and Learning
12. Chutzpah to Pajamas—World Borrowings
13. The Pop/Soda/Coke Divide
14. Maths, Wombats, and *Les Bluejeans*
15. Foot and Pedestrian—Word Cousins
16. Desultory Somersaults—Latin Roots
17. Analogous Prologues—Greek Roots
18. The Tough Stuff of English Spelling
19. The *b* in *Debt*—Meddling in Spelling
20. Of Mice, Men, and Y'All
21. I'm Good ... Or Am I Well?
22. How *Snuck* Sneaked In
23. Um, Well, Like, You Know
24. Wicked Cool—The Irreverence of Slang
25. Boy Toys and Bad Eggs—Slangy Wordplay
26. Spinster, Bachelor, Guy, Dude
27. Firefighters and Freshpersons
28. A Slam Dunk—The Language of Sports
29. Fooling Around—The Language of Love
30. Gung-Ho—The Language of War
31. Filibustering—The Language of Politics
32. LOL—The Language of the Internet
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Briefing



\$105

New price of a day pass at Walt Disney World's Magic Kingdom in Orlando, the first time tickets at the theme park have broken the hundred-dollar mark

'Today's terrorism requires little more than a camera phone, a knife and a victim.'

TONY ABBOTT, Australian Prime Minister, decrying the methods of the militant group ISIS as he outlined tough new antiterrorism measures



Apple

The tech giant hit a new market-capitalization record and is worth almost \$775 billion



GOOD WEEK
BAD WEEK



Lenovo

The computer maker caught flak over software in laptops that can let in hackers

'I do not believe that the President loves America.'

RUDY GIULIANI, former New York City mayor, criticizing President Obama for what he called a weak foreign policy; his remarks drew a backlash and forced Republican presidential contenders to weigh in



875

Number of lives claimed by a swine-flu outbreak in India, where more than 16,000 people have contracted the H1N1 virus



'Remember that little talk we had about not believing everything written in the media?'

EMMA WATSON, actor, shooting down reports that the *Harry Potter* star was dating Prince Harry



'Such behavior is abhorrent and has no place in football or society.'

ENGLISH SOCCER TEAM CHELSEA, in a statement condemning fans who were caught on camera preventing a black Frenchman from boarding a train and shouting racist chants at him after a match in Paris

68%

Percentage of Americans who believe that wealthy households pay too little in federal taxes, according to an AP-GfK poll

'Too many Americans remain unemployed or underemployed.'

JANET YELLEN, Federal Reserve chair, telling a congressional committee that the central bank is in no hurry to raise interest rates amid a gradually improving economy



Briefing

LightBox

Before the Fall

Ukrainian soldiers wait along a road to Debaltsevo on Feb. 15, hours before a cease-fire with rebels was to begin. The cease-fire collapsed, and government troops fled the town under fire on Feb. 18—a major victory for the rebels and their Russian backers.

Photograph by Ross McDonnell

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World

Latin America's Losing Leaders

By Ian Bremmer

Voters everywhere sour on elected leaders over time. Even in countries where opposition parties are weak and divided, unpopular leaders can lose their political mojo surprisingly quickly—and nowhere is that clearer today than in four key Latin American countries.

Venezuela In a nation that must import almost everything but crude oil, crashing oil prices make President Nicolás Maduro's life even tougher. Maduro has been in office less than two years, but his party has held power since 1999. The hand-picked successor of the charismatic Hugo Chávez, he has an approval rating of 22%. The economy will shrink this year by 7%. Inflation has

climbed to 68%, and unequal access to hard currency ensures that the poor are hit harder than the rich. In Caracas, rates of violent crime per capita remain among the highest in the world. Add it up and Maduro is the Latin American leader least likely to finish his term.

Mexico Enrique Peña Nieto has been in power just 27 months, and his presidential honeymoon is long over. Sluggish growth, a large tax hike, the presumed murder of 43 missing students and conflict-of-interest allegations against Peña Nieto, his wife and some of his closest advisers have helped make him the least popular Mexican President in a generation.

Yet GDP growth is expected to reach 3.4% this year, more than double the rate expected for the region. Peña Nieto's PRI party controls Congress, and the opposition also

faces corruption allegations. He should hang on.

Brazil President Dilma Rousseff begins her second term with much bigger problems than she has ever faced. Stagnant growth, high inflation, the prospect of rationing water and electricity, and a scandal at state-owned oil firm Petrobras—a company Rousseff once led—all weigh on her. The percentage of poll respondents who rate Rousseff's performance as "excellent" or "good" has fallen from 42% to 23% in just the past two months. It's going to be a rough ride—for Rousseff and her country.

Argentina President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner's approval ratings are below 30%. Growth is slow. Worst of all, Kirchner has been formally accused of trying to cover up the deadliest terrorist attack in the country's history. Accusations against Kirchner began immediately after the mysterious death on Jan. 18 of prosecutor Alberto Nisman, who was set to testify the next day on allegations that in exchange for economic favors from Tehran, Kirchner hid evidence of Iran's responsibility for a terrorist attack on a Jewish community center in Buenos Aires that killed 85 people in 1994. Kirchner is lucky her term will end later this year before mounting political and legal problems can finish her off.

Foreign-affairs columnist Bremmer is the president of Eurasia Group, a political-risk consultancy



Protesters angry about Maduro's policies take to the streets in Caracas

U.S.

'I pray that we can find and build the government that we deserve.'

ALEJANDRO GONZÁLEZ INÁRRITU, the Mexican director of *Birdman*, speaking at the Academy Awards ceremony after the movie won Best Picture on Feb. 22. The thinly veiled jab at Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto, who is embattled by personal scandal and gang violence, drew national attention in Mexico. The President's party, the PRI, tweeted, "We are building a better government."



POLL

DO YOU LIKE YOUR POLITICAL SYSTEM?

The Pew Research Center asked people in 31 emerging and developing countries if they were satisfied by the political system where they lived. Here's a sampling of how many said yes:



63%
India



53%
Jordan



29%
Brazil



25%
Thailand



10%
Lebanon



Breaking and Entering

SPAIN Police push past furniture as they force their entry into the Madrid apartment of Emilia Montoya Vazquez on Feb. 25 to evict her and her family. Montoya could not afford to pay rent to the apartment's owner, a state-run company that has sold hundreds of units to private investors to accommodate budget cuts linked to Spain's austerity measures. The eviction was carried out despite activists who attempted to block the door. *Photograph by Andres Kudacki—AP*

ROUNDUP

How Greece's Rebellion Unraveled

Euro-zone finance ministers agreed to a four-month bailout extension on Feb. 24 for Greece after weeks of bitter negotiations. But to win their support, newly elected Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras of the far-left Syriza Party had to agree to scale back earlier antiausterity pledges. Here's a look at the status of some of those promises:



No Extension

Tsipras initially refused to seek an extension to Greece's \$273 billion bailout. But as funds dried up and a run on banks appeared imminent, his government had little choice but to enter talks.



No Privatization

The Prime Minister will likely have to reverse course on halting the sale of publicly owned ports and rail-freight companies now that Greece has promised creditors it won't touch ongoing privatizations.



No Wage Cuts

Tsipras says he still won't cut public-sector wages. But he has had to delay his campaign promise to raise the minimum wage nationwide; it was lowered to \$660 a month under the 2012 bailout agreement.



No Pension Cuts

Tsipras averted further cuts to pensions by agreeing to modernize the pension system. He'll be looking for similar concessions on social programs as his country negotiates a new longer-term bailout.



QATAR

**74
DEGREES**

Average daily high (23°C) in Qatar in December; the international soccer body FIFA is expected to vote in March to shift the 2022 World Cup to November–December from the summer, when temperatures routinely exceed 104°F (40°C)

Trending In



CENSORSHIP

A court in Thailand sentenced two activists to 30 months in prison on Feb. 23 for "damaging the monarchy" in a student play they staged in 2013 about a fictional King. The ruling military junta says enforcing Thailand's strict law against insulting the monarch is a national priority.



ACTIVISM

Turkish men donned miniskirts for a demonstration on Feb. 21 to protest violence against women after the murder of 20-year-old student Ozgecan Aslan, allegedly for resisting a rape. A human-rights group says the number of women murdered in Turkey rose by 31%, to 281 in 2014.



WAR GAMES

South Korea and the U.S. begin two months of joint military drills on March 2. The annual exercises reliably stoke tensions with North Korea, which often issues threats and stages weapons tests in protest. North Korea's state media called the drills an exercise for war.

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Garrett Walker
THE NAIVE PRESIDENT



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NEW EPISODES
February 27

Nation



Standing in judgment Supreme Court Justices at the State of the Union address on Jan. 20

Legacy on Trial The fate of key Obama initiatives rests with the Supreme Court

BY HALEY SWEETLAND EDWARDS

WHEN U.S. DISTRICT JUDGE ANDREW Hanen ruled against President Barack Obama's sweeping immigration overhaul on Feb. 16, he did more than throw the future of 5 million immigrants facing deportation into doubt. In siding with Texas and 25 other states that had challenged Obama's Executive Order, Hanen ensured that the fate of one of the President's signature initiatives will be tied up in litigation that could go all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court.

It would be in good company there. In the past six years, nearly all the building blocks of Obama's domestic legacy—from health care and financial reforms to environmental regulations—have been challenged in court. Dodd-Frank, the massive banking-reform law enacted after the financial crisis, has been picked at in dozens of federal cases. Last June, the Supreme Court confirmed a lower court's decision to overturn a handful of the Administration's recess appointments. And by the end of the court's current term this summer, the Justices will have ruled three separate times on Obamacare and twice on the Administration's new

EPA mandates that are meant to curb climate change.

These lawsuits are both a symptom and a cause of the partisan gridlock in Washington. On one hand, they are part of a continuing Republican effort to undo the Obama Administration's early legislative victories. On the other, they represent a pushback against a White House that has used regulatory and executive action to end-run a divided Congress—a tactic that has exposed it to legal challenges. But if the battles are ending up at the Supreme Court, they are starting at the state level

IN 2010 ALONE,
COORDINATED
GROUPS OF STATE
ATTORNEYS GENERAL
SUED THE OBAMA
ADMINISTRATION
52 TIMES

with increasingly large partisan groups of state attorneys general.

Since Obama took office, state attorneys general have joined to participate in hundreds of suits against the federal government. Sometimes they have directly sued federal agencies; other times they've filed influential friend-of-the-court briefs or collaborated with private entities on legal strategies. In 2010 alone, coalitions of attorneys general sued the Obama Administration a record 52 times, according to Paul Nolette, a political scientist at Marquette University and an expert on modern-day attorneys general.

It wasn't always that way. In the 1980s and '90s, state attorneys general acted largely independently of one another. If a states'-rights issue arose, state challenges were often nonpartisan and involved smaller groups of AGs. But that bipartisan collaboration withered as the nation became more polarized, and partisan AG associations, formed in the past 15 years, helped facilitate collaboration between members.

In the past decade, the practice of suing the federal government has become "institutionalized," Nolette says. Under Obama, Republican attorneys general have been particularly active. "We've never seen anywhere close to this level of intense Republican activism and collaboration before," he says. Michael Greve, a conservative scholar and professor of law at George Mason University, expects the trend to continue. "If the next President is a Republican, you'll see the same crusade on the part of Democrats," he says.

Against that backdrop, Obama has upped the stakes for his legacy, gambling that the forward-leaning executive actions he has taken in his second term will stand up in court. This spring, the Supreme Court will once again decide the fate of Obamacare and will determine whether the EPA can set certain standards for power-plant emissions. Both challenges have been joined by large groups of Republican state AGs. Their case against the President's immigration order is currently under appeal and could be added to the high court's docket before the year is out.

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Health

The New Way To Prevent Nut Allergies? It's with nuts

BY ALICE PARK

FOR YEARS, THE ADVICE to parents worried about food allergies has focused, for reasons that make intuitive sense, on avoidance. After all, if kids don't eat common allergens like peanuts, dairy or eggs, they can't have a bad reaction to them.

But research shows that's not how the immune system works. And in fact, the opposite tactic—exposing kids to possible trigger foods—may be wiser. A breakthrough study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* found that both allergic and nonallergic infants who ate small amounts of peanuts had a much lower rate of allergy than those who avoided nuts altogether for five years. The key is to start early.

To come to this conclusion, researchers found 640 infants with eczema and egg allergies. Because their immune systems

86%
lower allergy risk when infants ate peanuts

3X
more peanut allergies since 1997

18 MONTHS
average age of allergy onset

were already primed to react to antigens, some already tested positive for peanut allergies while others were more likely to develop them. But if they ate small, carefully monitored amounts for five years, they had an 86% lower chance of developing the allergy than those who avoided nuts did.

As it stands, leading medical groups no longer tell parents to avoid giving babies nuts, based on evidence that small amounts can train an allergic kid's system to react more mildly to the offending ingredient.

But these are the first results to show that it may be possible to *prevent* the allergy altogether.

The reason may rest in the gut. When digested, peanuts are more likely to be accepted as a food, while peanut residue via the skin—delivered, say, by a mom's kiss—may be registered as a threat, triggering an allergic reaction.

It's too early to give concrete advice on the basis of these findings, but for now it looks like the best medicine for peanut allergies may, in fact, be nuts themselves.

The Checkup

HEALTH NEWS EXAMINED

HEADLINE SAYS:

Mindfulness Meditation Can Cure Insomnia

SCIENCE SAYS: After just six sessions, the improvement in sleep quality in people trained in mindfulness was significantly greater than in people who went through a program focused on sleep education. It's still early, but the study suggests that mindfulness may be an inexpensive, drug-free option for sleep issues.

It can't hurt



HEADLINE SAYS:

Washing Dishes by Hand Leads to Fewer Allergies

SCIENCE SAYS: Evidence is mounting that getting a little dirty does the body good. This study suggests it's possible that eating off hand-washed dishes means kids get more bacteria exposure and build stronger immune systems, leading to fewer allergies.



Intriguing but early



HEADLINE SAYS:

A Skin Test May Detect Alzheimer's and Parkinson's

SCIENCE SAYS: Compared with normally aging people, those with Alzheimer's and Parkinson's have higher levels of proteins that can be picked up in skin biopsies. That's because both skin and brain nerves start from the same tissue in the embryo.

Worth more study



BIRTH CONTROL

The IUD Rises

For half a century, birth control pills have been the protection of choice for women who want to avoid pregnancy. But new federal data reveals that preferences are starting to shift—slowly. More women are now opting for long-lasting reversible contraceptives (LARC) like the intrauterine

device (IUD) and the implant, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Both devices are roughly 99% effective at preventing pregnancy.

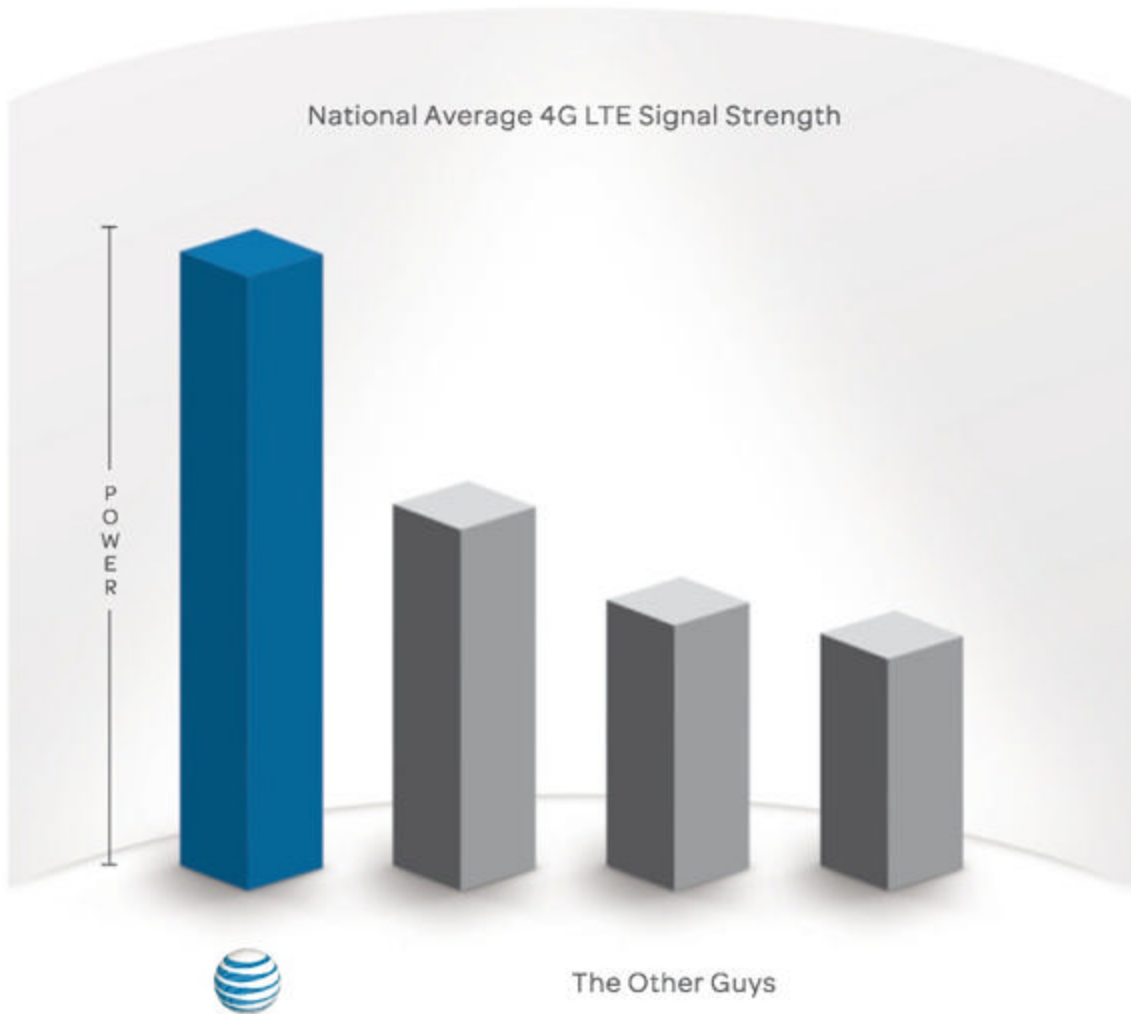
"I am delighted LARC use is rising," says Dr. Mary Jane Minkin, professor of obstetrics, gynecology and reproductive sciences at the Yale School of Medicine. "These methods

take the human variable out of it, and they work very nicely."

The CDC reports that LARC use has increased fivefold in the past decade, amounting to roughly 7% of women of reproductive age. And while LARC adoption is still slow among the general U.S. population, it's not among doctors and nurses. A study released in late February found that 42% of them use IUDs or implants.

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Milestones



Terry, playing his trumpet circa 1955, died Feb. 21 at 94

DIED

Clark Terry

Jazz trumpeter

By Alan Hicks and Justin Kauflin

When we first met Clark Terry, we could not believe we'd just met one of the greatest musicians of all time. He was a legendary jazz trumpeter, playing in the orchestras of Duke Ellington and Count Basie alongside 20th century greats like Charles Mingus and Thelonious Monk. He was NBC's first black staff musician and a National Endowment for the Arts Jazz Master. Millions of Americans knew him for his signature song, "Mumbles." But to us, he was a mentor and teacher.

He was a master instructor who could see the potential in his students (who ranged from children to luminaries such as Miles Davis and Quincy Jones) and took great pride in helping them develop. Clark will be remembered as one of the greatest musicians and educators of all time, but the thing that stands out in our minds is the love and encouragement he shared so freely with everyone in his life.

One of our favorite quotes from Clark in our documentary is, "Your mind is a powerful asset. Use it for positive thoughts and you'll learn what I've learned. I call it getting on the plateau of positivity."

Clark lived by example on that plateau.

Hicks directed the documentary *Keep On Keepin' On*, about Terry's mentorship of **Kauflin**

DIED

David Carr

Media critic

David Carr, the extraordinary New York Times media columnist, died on the job Feb. 12 at age 58, suddenly and unexpectedly. He was a reformed crack addict and street dealer with the faint, gravelly voice of a wino bumming a buck. Though he ordered only soft drinks, I can say no one looked more at home hunched over a dim-lit bar. He was a Raymond Carver character plopped into the Times' Edith Wharton world.

A lot of people have pointed to Carr's intelligence and talent—and properly so. He was wonderful at translating the patter of media sales talk into the argot of real life, a skill that requires a lot of brainpower. I am happy to pay tribute to his brains and gifts, but I also want to put in a word for his enthusiastic work ethic. He covered his beat like a blanket, expanding the traditional role of the media critic to include every gust and swirl of the digital tempest.

"The trick," he wrote in his memoir, *The Night of the Gun*, is to enjoy the second chance "and hope the caper doesn't end anytime soon." If the caper ended too soon for him and for his readers, it was a doozy while it lasted.

—DAVID VON DREHLE



DIED

Lesley Gore, 68, singer known for pop hits from the 1960s, including "It's My Party" and "You Don't Own Me," which became an anthem for the feminist movement.

ANNOUNCED

By **Walmart**, that it will raise wages for a half-million employees to \$9 an hour, above the federal minimum wage. The company said the initiative would cost \$1 billion this fiscal year.

DIED

In a car accident, **Bob Simon**, 73, a 47-year veteran of CBS News who spent 19 seasons as a correspondent for *60 Minutes*, often reporting from war zones. He won 27 Emmy Awards.

VETOED

By President Obama, a bill to authorize construction of the controversial **Key-stone XL pipeline**. The veto of the oil pipeline from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico was only the third of Obama's presidency.

DIED

Philip Levine, 87, a former U.S. poet laureate whose collection *The Simple Truth* won a Pulitzer Prize. He taught English for three decades at California State University at Fresno.



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Rana Foroohar

The Real Meaning of \$9 an Hour

Walmart's modest wage hike isn't just good for business. It's proof the economy is doing better



WALMART'S DECISION ON FEB. 19 TO raise its base wage to \$9 an hour, \$1.75 higher than the federal minimum, has been heralded as a major victory for American labor. Wall Street punished the world's largest retailer for the pay hike—which will cost the firm \$1 billion this fiscal year—by driving down its shares. But labor economists and liberals lauded the raise as a new wave of “Fordism,” referring to Henry Ford's historic 1914 decision to double wages in his factories, which not only boosted productivity and reduced turnover but also created more customers for his company's products.

Walmart's move is seen by some as a sea change for the retail sector. “Walmart sets the standard, and the fact that they've kept wages so low has made it hard for others to raise them,” explains Isabel Sawhill, co-director of the Center on Children and Families at the Brookings Institution. Now it's likely that pay for other low-income workers will rise, not just in retail but also in other sectors like home health care, child care and fast food, all of which compete for the same workers as Walmart.

THE QUESTION IS, HOW MUCH WILL IT MATTER? Labor's share of the economic pie has been decreasing since the 1970s, thanks to globalization, which has outsourced low-wage jobs (and technology, which has destroyed them outright); the shrinking of unions; and pressure from Wall Street to reduce costs, which turbocharged all these trends. The corporate share, meanwhile, is at record highs. That means Walmart's move to \$9 an hour won't make much difference in macroeconomic terms. The \$1 billion it will effectively put in the hands of 40% of its 1.3 million U.S. employees is a tiny fraction of our \$16 trillion economy. Damon Silvers, the policy director of the AFL-CIO, estimates that even if all low-wage employers followed Walmart's lead, it wouldn't move the needle on labor's share by even a single percentage point. “That's not to say that the Walmart workers' victory isn't an important step forward for low-wage workers,” he says. “But it also shows what a small piece of the pie they've been getting.”

Indeed, the Walmart workers who have spent much of the past year in parking lots with bullhorns were asking for \$15 an hour and better schedules. “When I started, I saw how many of us were working for one of the richest companies in the world and yet we had to be on public assistance,” says Kelly Sallee, 22,

**GOOD PAY
IS GOOD
BUSINESS**

“No one loses anything by raising wages as soon as he is able. It has always paid us.”

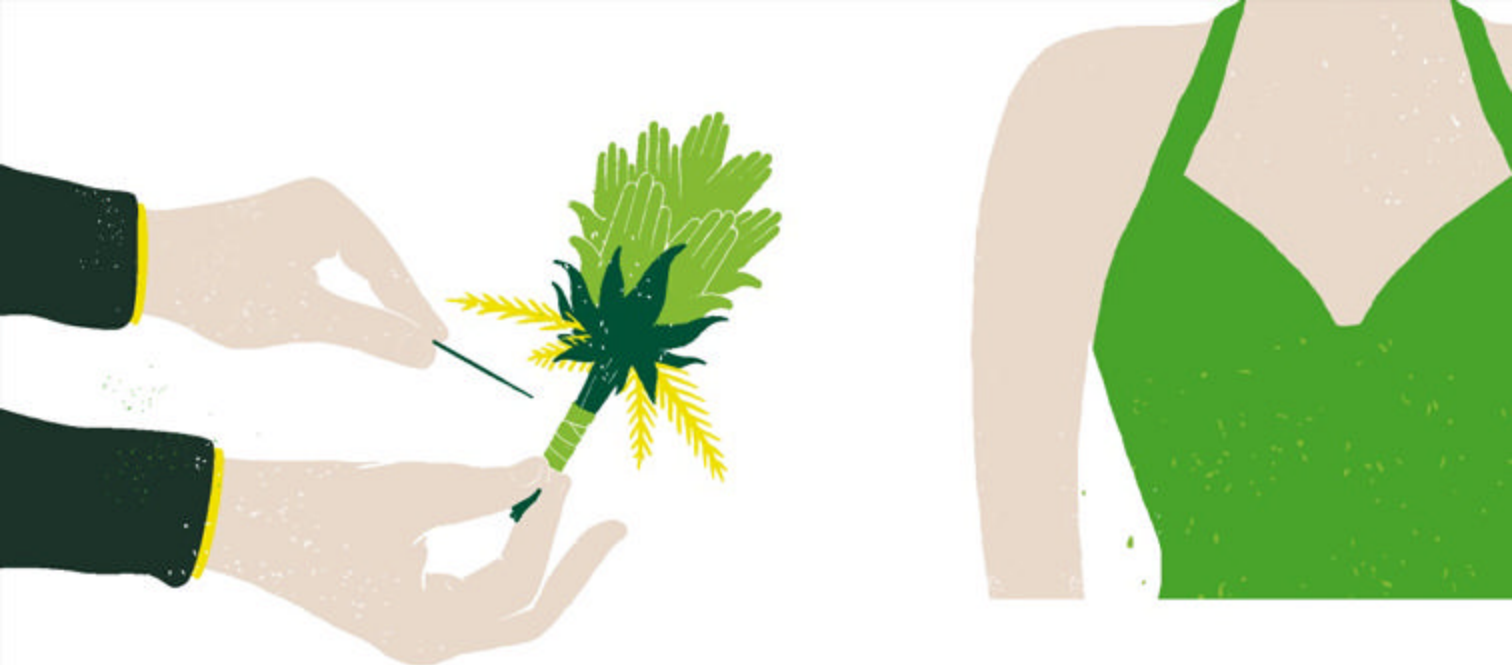
—HENRY FORD
in 1934, 20 years
after doubling
workers'
pay—a move
that helped
cut employee
absenteeism
from 10% to less
than 1% and
boosted sales
63% in one year



who has worked for Walmart for eight months and took part in wage protests in Dayton, Ohio. Despite the pay increase, employees like Sallee, who says she'd like to work full time but can't get enough hours, are still struggling for improvements in scheduling, an important labor-rights issue. Retailers across the country use software to optimize scheduling around store traffic. This often means less notice given for when workers must report to their jobs and erratic cuts in some of their hours, which labor activists believe may also be intended to decrease the number of workers on full-time benefits. Walmart denies this and says it would prefer more full-time workers to multiple part-timers. The company also says that the \$9 it will pay is better than the \$7 and change paid by many other retailers, even some unionized ones, and that it gives more notice of shift changes than many others. It says that workers can ask for more hours via Walmart's intranet system and that 1 million hours a week regularly go unclaimed.

But the fact that Walmart workers, who aren't unionized in the U.S., got anything at all shows the PR pressure that companies like it are coming under as economic inequality gains clout as a political issue. Twenty-nine states have raised the minimum wage, and presidential candidates from both parties are expected to wrestle with the challenge for the next 18 months. Whether or not Walmart's top brass, a conservative bunch, has experienced an ideological shift is not the point. That it is concerned about turnover costs as a better economy gives laborers more options for where to work is most significant.

AN EXTRA COUPLE BUCKS AN HOUR WILL CERTAINLY help low-wage workers, and they'll be more likely to spend it than the rich, meaning it will drive more economic growth. It will not be a net job destroyer, as some believe. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office found that while a \$9 minimum wage could put from zero to 500,000 low-end jobs at risk as companies try to limit staffing, it would also lift 1 million people out of poverty and increase earnings for 16.5 million workers. As Sawhill puts it, “That's not quite a free lunch, but it's pretty cheap.” That's a reason for Congress to raise the federal minimum wage. But even if it doesn't, Walmart workers have proved they can move the most powerful retailer in the world to change. That means they, and others, can do it again. And that, more than anything else, may be the real victory. ■



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Sense and Sensibility

Jeb Bush's grownup tone is a breath of fresh air amid so many strident conservative voices



IN A WEEK DURING WHICH RUDOLPH Giuliani went crusader-ballistic questioning President Obama's patriotism—indeed, questioning his upbringing—Jeb Bush gave a speech about foreign affairs, the third serious policy speech he's given this winter. Giuliani got all the headlines, of course. That's how you do it now: say something heinous and the world will beat a path to your door. And Bush's speech wasn't exactly a barn burner. His delivery was rushed and unconvincing, though he was more at ease during the question period. He was criticized for a lack of specificity. But Bush offered something far more important than specificity. He offered a sense of his political style and temperament, which in itself presents a grownup and civil alternative to the Giuliani-style pestilence that has plagued the Republic for the past 25 years.

IT HAS BEEN THE SAME IN EACH OF BUSH'S THREE big speeches. He is a political conservative with a moderate disposition. And after giving his speeches a close read, I find Bush's disposition far more important than his position on any given issue. In fact, it's a breath of fresh air. I disagree with his hard line toward Cuba and the Iran nuclear negotiations, and I look forward to hearing what he has to say about reforming Obamacare. His arguments so far merit consideration, even when one disagrees with them.

There is none of John McCain's chesty bellicosity. Bush makes no false, egregious claims, on issues foreign or domestic. He resists the partisan hyperbole that has coarsened our politics. He even, at one point in his foreign policy speech, praised Obama for the position he has taken on—get a map!—the Baltic states. He proposes a return to the bipartisan foreign policy that was operational when this nation was at its strongest. And he criticizes Obama for the right things: his sloppy rhetoric, his lack of strategy. You don't say "Assad must go" and then let him stay. You don't announce a "pivot" toward Asia—what are you pivoting away from? You don't put human rights above national security, as Obama has done in his arm's-length relationship with Egypt, which is actually fighting ISIS on the ground and in the air.

Bush's economic vision is traditionally Republican. He believes the economy is more likely to grow with lower taxes than with government stimulus. He doesn't bash the rich, but he doesn't offer supply-side voodoo, either. The American "promise is not

FINDING HIS POLITICAL VOICE

OPPORTUNITY

Jeb Bush's PAC, Right to Rise, has promoted economic empowerment for the poor—something of a contrast to Mitt Romney's infamous "47%" gaffe

BIPARTISANSHIP

As recently as 2012, the former Florida governor offered praise for President Obama's efforts in education reform; when a politician challenges his base on anything, he said, "we should give them credit"

broken when someone is wealthy," he told the Detroit Economic Club. "It is broken when achieving success is far beyond our imagination." He is worried about middle-class economic stagnation, about the inability of the working poor to rise—his PAC is called Right to Rise. His solution is providing more opportunity rather than income redistribution. We'll see, over time, what he means by that. And he favors reforming the public sector, especially the education and regulatory systems, as a way to create new economic energy. "It's time to challenge every aspect of how government works," he told a national meeting of auto dealers in San Francisco.

This would be a good argument to have in 2016. It is a fundamental challenge to what the Democrats have allowed themselves to become: the party of government workers rather than a defender of the working-, middle-class majority. Bush has already drawn fire for his record as an education reformer, with his support for charter schools and educational standards. But his argument goes beyond that to a more fundamental critique of government. He has praised the work of Philip K. Howard, whose book, *The Rule of Nobody*, is a road map for de-lawyering and rethinking the regulatory system.

AGAIN, THE WAY BUSH TALKS ABOUT GOVERNMENTAL sclerosis is the important thing. It's no surprise he's in favor of the Keystone pipeline and hydraulic fracking—he's invested in fracking—but listen to this: "Washington shouldn't try to regulate hydraulic fracking out of business," he told the auto dealers. "It should be done reasonably and thoughtfully to protect the natural environment." There is no call to blow up the Environmental Protection Agency or ignore science. But there is awareness of a radical truth: that there is no creative destruction in government. The civil service laws written in the 19th century, the regulations written before the information age, are ancient, slow-motion processes that have corroded the government's ability to operate effectively.

Bush's fate will tell us a lot about the Republican Party. He does not seem to be an angry man, and the need to screech has been the great Republican vulnerability in recent presidential campaigns. His candidacy takes crazy off the table—no nutso talk about vaccinations or evolution or the President's patriotism. Even if you disagree with him, his civility demands respect.



**"WE'D BE LOST
WITHOUT HER."
-HUFFINGTON POST**

**"RACHEL
MADDOW
KNOWS HOW
TO TELL THE
WHOLE STORY."
-NPR (BOSTON)**

**"SHE'S
A COMPLETE
INSPIRATION ON
SO MANY LEVELS."
-GLAMOUR**

**THE RACHEL
MADDOW
SHOW**

WEEKNIGHTS at 9PM ET





WORLD

THE WAR

As the U.S. and its allies prepare to attack the terrorist group's stronghold in Iraq,

Counterattack *Kurdish soldiers drive through an Iraqi village in December after taking it back from ISIS forces*

Photograph by Moises Saman



ON ISIS

the real challenge is the chaos that could come after By [David Von Drehle](#)

TO THE LURID BUTCHERS OF THE ISLAMIC State of Iraq and Greater Syria (ISIS), the Pentagon says, Picture this:

It's April in Iraq, the brief season of fine fighting weather after the winter gully washers and before the crippling heat and sandstorms of summer. Outside Mosul, the largest city under ISIS control, is an army of roughly 25,000 men, drawn from a cross-section of Iraqi society: Sunni tribesmen determined to rid themselves of the fanatics. Shi'ite militiamen eager to reassert the authority of Baghdad. Battle-hardened Kurds of the *peshmerga* army ready to seal off escape and resupply routes.

The last time ISIS confronted an Iraqi army in Mosul—in June 2014—the government soldiers melted like soft-serve ice cream, setting off a panic that helped topple Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki and briefly threatened the capital, Baghdad. But these troops, the Pentagon argues, will be freshly trained and expertly led. They will march with American military drones and bombers darting overhead, and they will likely have elite Western special forces alongside to spot targets and choreograph tactics. They will pack an overwhelming punch.

According to a recent briefing by an official from the U.S. Central Command (Centcom), up to 2,000 ISIS troops are posted in Mosul. Military doctrine suggests that five soldiers are needed to dislodge each fortified enemy fighter. This force will budget more than twice that. "There will be five Iraqi army brigades. There will be three smaller brigades that will comprise a reserve force," the Centcom official said. "There will be three *pesh[merga]* brigades that will help contain from the north and isolate from the west, and then there will be what we're calling a Mosul fighting force"—made up primarily of former Mosul police. A brigade of Iraqi counterterrorism specialists will round out the attack.

Republican Senators John McCain of Arizona and Lindsey Graham of South Carolina denounced the Pentagon's decision to disclose so much of its plans. But Uncle Sam was sending the message that two can play the intimidation game. Intent on countering ISIS propaganda, the briefer noted that the Battle of Mosul will come after months of pounding on ISIS positions

by a multinational air wing led by U.S. fighter jets and bombers. Already, the sorties number in the thousands, military officials report; coalition bombs have taken out hundreds of ISIS targets—vehicles, buildings, oil assets, even small, dug-in fighting positions. An estimated 6,000 or more ISIS fighters have been killed, a toll that would be higher save for the fact that the terrorists are afraid to show themselves in sufficient numbers to be hit.

ISIS—afraid? This was something new. This image of a besieged terrorist army facing a powerful counterattack confounds the familiar picture of brazen and burgeoning ISIS legions, sovereign over lands larger than Belgium, boasting terrorist cadres from Lebanon to Pakistan. More formidable than its al-Qaeda precursors in the view of many experts, ISIS is more than a network of terrorist cells or even a militia: it's almost a nation. In the tracts of Iraq and Syria under its aegis, ISIS collects taxes and delivers government services with one hand while slaughtering prisoners and demanding ransoms with the other. Its armies are supplied from captured arsenals and paid with money from looted banks.

Osama bin Laden talked of establishing a new caliphate to rule over the world's devout Muslims. ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi actually declared himself the new Caliph last June—and thousands of violent jihadists worldwide have pledged allegiance to his black flag. His supporters see nothing but strength in the movement's ultraviolent propaganda, which exploits 21st century media to communicate the 7th century vision of Armageddon at the core of ISIS ideology.

Coalition air strikes have yet to interrupt the steady flow of ISIS's carefully scripted videos. Its filmmakers spare no detail, casting hooded Westerners as their spokesmen and executioners, as if to say that ISIS is everywhere, anonymous yet lethal. They seize flighty Internet attention spans by varying their outrages—from beheading individual prisoners to burning a Jordanian pilot alive to carrying out the mass execution of 21 Egyptian Coptic Christians in Libya. They costume their captives in orange jumpsuits, evoking the prisoners held by the U.S. at Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo Bay. They murdered



their Egyptian victims on a Mediterranean beach, where the Copts' blood mixed with waves that might soon enough touch the hem of Europe.

"They are seeking to establish themselves as the vanguard terrorist organization that is at war with the U.S. and the West on behalf of Islam," explains Ben Rhodes, the Deputy National Security Adviser to President Obama. "Therefore they need to attract as much attention as they can."

Yet which picture of ISIS is closer to reality? Is it the reeling and ragged force battered by coalition bombs? Or is it the triumphal caliphate framed in ISIS videos? The answer lies in a tangle of complexity somewhere in between. As a military force, ISIS is only as strong as the power vacuum it inhabits. Where anarchy reigns, its small but fanatically ruthless units can pile up rapid victories. But against disciplined and well-supplied foes, ISIS fades. As an ideology, the movement probably burns too hot to take substantial hold in healthy societies. ISIS feeds on chaos. The West will likely see more lone wolves who dedicate acts of violence to the



Sending a message *An ISIS video may show the partner of the man who attacked a Paris kosher supermarket*

celebrity jihadists of ISIS. But for now, it seems, al-Baghdadi's organization would rather recruit Westerners to the battlefields of Syria and Iraq than deploy them on terrorist missions back home. That fact was driven home on Feb. 25 when three Brooklyn residents—a citizen of Kazakhstan and two citizens of Uzbekistan—were arrested and charged with attempting to provide material support to ISIS.

The greatest threat that ISIS poses—even to the poor souls living under ISIS rule—is the unintended damage that might follow from the effort to eradicate the group. A growing number of nations appear ready and determined to defeat ISIS, yet the group continues to provoke its enemies. Why? Because a labyrinth of hazards and pitfalls lies between the looming battle for Mosul and the unseeable, unknowable end of the conflict. ISIS is luring the world into a trap. Always troubled, the Middle East faces crisis on all fronts: the Arab Spring in tatters, conflict boiling between Sunni and Shi'ite Muslims, millions of refugees stranded by the Syrian civil war, Yemen and Libya leaderless, the

Sinai breaking from Egyptian control, Iran racked by economic sanctions yet driving a wedge between the U.S. and Israel. ISIS has tentacles in all these troubles. It won't be easy to pry those tentacles loose without making everything worse.

Which is exactly what ISIS wants: to make matters worse.

NATURE OF THE THREAT

ISIS GOES BY MANY NAMES: THE ISLAMIC State of Iraq and Syria, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) or simply the Islamic State. Its Arabic-speaking foes usually refer to it, in sneering tones, as Daesh. The group's history is almost as varied as its present-day labels. Hatched in the late 1990s as a jihadist cell under the leadership of a Jordanian radical known as Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the group found its calling as al-Qaeda's franchise in Iraq after the U.S. invasion of 2003. Even by the standards of that time and place, al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) was bloodthirsty, unleashing a campaign of suicide bombings and videotaped beheadings, with Shi'ite Muslims the most frequent targets. Al-Zarqawi's

fellow Sunnis in the main al-Qaeda leadership eventually soured on his tactics; by some accounts, it was an al-Qaeda source who betrayed his location shortly before he was killed in his hideout by a pair of American smart bombs in 2006.

The following two successors to al-Zarqawi were killed in 2010. Then al-Baghdadi took charge. A mysterious figure—perhaps a soldier, perhaps a cleric—he favored al-Zarqawi's playbook of mass murder and widespread mayhem, even though AQI's excessive tactics had triggered the backlash beginning in 2005 known as the Sunni Awakening. Hoping for a less violent future, Sunni tribes had risen up against the terrorists. Some of al-Baghdadi's best soldiers ended up in neighboring Syria, where they were clapped into prison by the Shi'ite-oriented dictator Bashar Assad. But then a strange and breathtakingly cynical thing happened. After widespread protests broke out in 2011 against corrupt tyrants across the Middle East, Assad found himself in a desperate struggle for power. To justify a brutal crackdown, he turned jihadists loose, knowing they would surely join the fight against him. When they did, he cloaked the repression of his enemies in a mantle of antiterrorism.

Meanwhile, the Americans pulled out of Iraq, and Prime Minister al-Maliki, a Shi'ite, turned on the Sunnis as soon as Uncle Sam was gone. Leading Sunni political figures were pushed from office, Sunni protests were violently suppressed, and critics charged al-Maliki with turning a blind eye to the work of Shi'ite death squads. Oppressed and resentful, the same Anbar tribes that had driven AQI out during the Awakening embraced the return of the group, now headed by al-Baghdadi.

"The environment was prepared for ISIS to enter Iraq widely, and all the support of the people at first came as a regular reaction to the unfairness that the Sunnis faced from the past Iraqi governments—especially the al-Maliki government," says Muthasher al-Samurai, former governor of Salahuddin province, which is now largely controlled by al-Baghdadi's men. "ISIS told the Sunnis they are here to support Sunnis."

The point of this history is that there was less than meets the eye to the dazzling

blitzkrieg that brought ISIS to the world's attention last year. Al-Baghdadi's troops raced through northwestern Iraq to the outskirts of Baghdad not because they were an unstoppable military force but because no one wanted to stop them. In city after city, they met seething residents eager for a champion. It was a cakewalk.

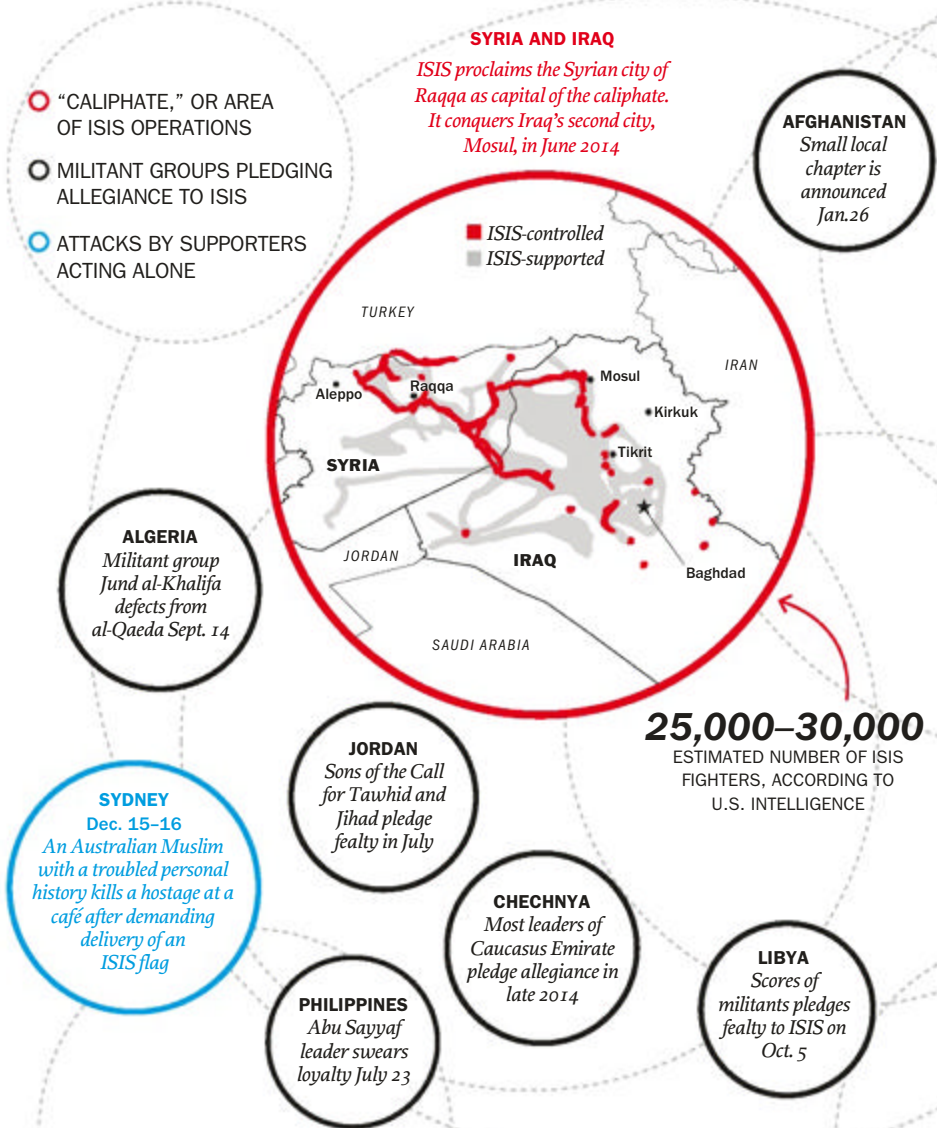
A relatively small fighting force—perhaps 25,000 to 30,000 spread thinly through two countries, according to U.S. intelligence—ISIS capitalized on the interfaith strife in Syria and Iraq to make itself seem larger than life. “The marginalization and resentment felt in the Sunni Muslim areas is real,” says Aron Lund, editor of the blog *Syria in Crisis* for the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. And as long as it continues, ISIS will have a home.

But if the military triumph was less than it seemed, ISIS has been brilliant at marketing the illusion of its invincibility. For thousands of would-be jihadis haunting makeshift mosques and Internet chat rooms or following ISIS on Twitter, al-Baghdadi's group was the first strong horse to come along in years. A decimated al-Qaeda had lost its grip on the radical imagination. The apocalyptic mastermind of 9/11, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, languished in prison, and the charismatic icon bin Laden was dead, succeeded by the comparatively colorless Ayman al-Zawahiri. Here was ISIS, bloody and fearless, willing to bring the medieval visions of jihadist philosophers to life.

In the East London suburb of Ilford, ISIS sympathizer and active proponent of jihad Anjem Choudary sat down with *TIME* to explain the appeal he finds in the movement. It comes down to Scripture, he says. The mass killings and immolations are required, he believes, by certain severe passages in the Quran. “When you start to see things like crucifixion and beheadings, people say, ‘Oh, I haven’t seen that before!’” says Choudary. “And yet that has always been there in the Quran.” What is new is the restored caliphate, which, he says, changes the rules on how such punishments could be applied, according to an extreme interpretation of early texts. “There has not been a situation where you have a Caliph who would implement those aspects of the penal code.”

SPHERES OF INFLUENCE

ISIS has stalled on the battlefield, but it continues to expand its brand, thanks to online fanboys, pledges of fealty from other militant groups and four lone-wolf attacks



THE SOCIAL-MEDIA FRONT

200,000 DAILY

NUMBER OF TWEETS FROM ISIS SUPPORTERS AND MEMBERS, INCLUDING RETWEETS

45,000

TWITTER ACCOUNTS USED BY ISIS SUPPORTERS IN FALL 2014; 12 ARE THOUGHT TO BE OFFICIAL

100

TWITTER ACCOUNTS ONE ISIS SUPPORTER HAS HAD SUSPENDED

Sources: Brookings; Flashpoint Global Partners; ICSR; "Voices From the Blogs"; Centcom

**ST-JEAN-SUR-
RICHELIEU, QUEBEC**

Oct. 20
*An ISIS supporter who
converted to Islam
runs down two
Canadian soldiers,
one fatally*

BRUSSELS
May 24

*An ISIS supporter opens
fire at the city's Jewish
Museum, killing
four*

EGYPT

*Sinai group Ansar
Beit al-Maqdis
pledges allegiance
Nov. 10*

YEMEN

*Ansar al-Sharia
dissents from
al-Qaeda and joins
ISIS in February*

PAKISTAN

*Several groups in the
jihadi hotbed
announce allegiance
in October and
November*

PARIS

Jan. 7-9
*After al-Qaeda gunmen
attack satirical weekly
Charlie Hebdo, killing 12,
an ISIS supporter shoots
dead a policewoman, then
four civilians in a kosher
supermarket*

81%

PERCENTAGE OF ARABIC SOCIAL-MEDIA
POSTS ABOUT ISIS FROM SIX NEARBY
ARAB STATES FROM JULY TO OCTOBER
2014 THAT ARE CRITICAL OF THE GROUP

This reading of Islam's founding text is far from the mainstream. But if al-Baghdadi's orgy of bloodshed repels Muslims by the millions, it has also attracted a few thousand Western Muslims to Syria and Iraq to defend the caliphate. The question is whether extreme violence is costing ISIS momentum, says Fawaz Gerges, the Emirates chair in contemporary Middle East studies at the London School of Economics. "ISIS has won support by capturing territories from the Iraqi and Syrian governments, showing by its deeds and actions—not just rhetoric—that it is able to help the Sunni communities defend themselves," he says.

"What we are seeing now is more and more Sunnis taking a second look at ISIS and wondering, What's going on here? We have many reports now that there are summary executions, that they're burning Iraqis, they're terrorizing the population." Refugees from the territory held by ISIS describe town squares decorated with severed heads and military conscription for children. The Sunnis may once again turn against al-Baghdadi to become "a liability that could really implode ISIS from within," Gerges says.

That's the hope of U.S. military and foreign policy planners, who helped to pressure al-Maliki from office in favor of a more conciliatory Prime Minister, Haider al-Abadi. The new administration in Iraq hopes to woo minority Sunnis with a share of the country's oil riches and a promise to authorize local units of the national guard—a counterweight to the Shi'ite militias backed by neighboring Iran.

Perhaps the best way to think about the ISIS threat is to weigh the power to control vs. the power to inspire. Where the group has control, it is nothing less than a nightmare. Unlike most terrorist organizations, it has sophisticated weapons, captured from arsenals well stocked by the departing Americans. It has many sources of revenue, including a special tax—the *jizya*—levied on Christians in its territory who hope to be left alone by this new government. ISIS kidnaps for ransom, plunders antiquities and smuggles commodities to market.

But unlike other terrorist organizations, ISIS also has large bills to pay. Much of its money must be plowed into local

patronage, experts explain, to shore up support and fulfill Quranic obligations. "Now that they have declared a caliphate," said Choudary, "that means they are providing food and shelter and facilities like education" to the Sunni faithful in the ISIS domain. Like other Middle East conquerors before it, ISIS may discover that governing territory is harder than winning it.

The ability of ISIS to inspire violence beyond its sphere of control rests with its propaganda arm, though it's not clear whether ISIS is lighting fires or simply blowing smoke. ISIS is adept at gaming Twitter by using bots and cascading retweets to project an impression of overwhelming support. And many of the terrorist cells now flying the black flag in scattered countries are pre-existing groups that have changed their brands, according to one senior U.S. Administration official. "Most of these groups are pretty insular," the official said. "Below that flag, it's all about themselves. They've got their own agenda, they've got their own objectives, and often those objectives are completely local—they're tribal, they're ethnic, they're religious." So far, ISIS has shown scant ability to direct the actions of its associates even in nearby countries. As for taking jihad to the West—attacking Rome, as ISIS puts it in its antimodern idiom—that's mostly talk. In contrast with al-Qaeda, ISIS has not directed a single successful plot in the West, although analysts say they can't rule one out.

"The threat to the homeland resembles what we have seen in Ottawa and Australia and Paris," says Rhodes, the White House adviser, referring to recent terrorist attacks. That is, "individuals who are either radicalized of their own volition taking up arms to commit those types of acts, or individuals who may have traveled to Iraq and Syria returning to create those kinds of attacks. People with guns or IEDs"—homemade bombs—"carrying out those kinds of attacks. It's different than 9/11."

NATURE OF THE TRAP

AS DANGEROUS AS IT IS TO HAVE A TERRORIST kingdom in the middle of the world's geopolitical tinderbox, ousting ISIS will be every bit as dangerous. Should the process begin in Mosul, expect a crimson springtime. "Retaking Mosul is going to be like

Fallujah on steroids,” says Thomas Donnelly of the American Enterprise Institute, referring to the two bloody battles in 2004 in the city in western Iraq that resulted in the deaths of more than 100 U.S. soldiers.

President Obama is determined not to put U.S. troops on the front lines. In a letter to members of Congress explaining his views, he wrote, “Local forces, rather than U.S. military forces, should be deployed to conduct such operations.” But can he find enough battle-tested local troops willing to fight and able to win a possible house-to-house struggle? “ISIS is a movement that would be hiding in caves if it did not have a professional cadre of trained, internationally recruited, professional light infantry,” says retired Marine Colonel Gary Anderson, who is skeptical of the Pentagon’s plan to train enough local troops to do the job. “They are very good at what they do, and the rabble of Iraqi, Syrian and Kurdish militias opposing them—and I include the Iraqi army here—is not going to dislodge them.”

Moreover, unless a strong majority of the liberating troops are Sunnis, the counteroffensive could be self-defeating. Sending a force bristling with Kurdish *peshmerga* and Shi’ite militias would only strengthen the image of ISIS as saviors of their people.

Though deeply skeptical about another war in the Middle East, Obama came away from a recent meeting at the U.N. more hopeful than before that something can be done. He met with the Shi’ite Iraqi Prime Minister al-Abadi and representatives from the Sunni leadership of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Jordan, Bahrain and Qatar. “For all the differences there have been in the region, everybody essentially agreed,” Rhodes says. “For the first time there was a regional alignment that understood that even if there were differences ... everybody could essentially agree that this was a group that had crossed into a different area. That’s when I think we had sensed that the regional balance had shifted to the point where this was the one thing everyone in the region could agree on.”

One deeply experienced American observer—retired Marine Corps General Anthony Zinni, former head of Centcom—recently returned from a trip to the Middle East full of similar confidence.



Stopped in its tracks An ISIS tank destroyed during the battle for the Syrian town of Kobani

Sunni-majority nations in the region “are getting scared,” Zinni says, “and have gotten angry at ISIS’s atrocious behavior.” The general believes that if Obama would commit 10,000 U.S. troops to coordinate the counteroffensive, the others would join in: “A brigade from the UAE, a brigade from Jordan, maybe a brigade or two from Saudi Arabia and a brigade or two from Egypt. We could certainly twist the arms of the Kuwaitis—they owe us anyway—maybe even the Qataris. I think if it starts to form that way, you could even see the French, the Brits, the Belgians and others throw in. Pretty soon, you could have a pretty good force.”

But that pretty good force would be a team of rivals, at best. For example, Egypt’s ambassador to the Arab League recently denounced Qatar as a sponsor of terrorism. Saudi Arabia’s new King Salman recently hosted a group of Islamic scholars with close ties to the Muslim

Brotherhood, which is the leading force in the opposition to Egyptian President Abdul Fattah al-Sisi.

At the same time, the very existence of the coalition could aggravate tensions on the Iraqi border with Iran. Shi’ite Iran, along with Assad, its vassal in Syria, wouldn’t be happy to see a multinational force of Sunni soldiers massing so close by, with the U.S. and its allies poised alongside. To many in the Iranian government, ISIS is a creation of Western interests intent on stirring up Sunnis and discrediting the Islamic faith.

What Yezid Sayigh, a senior associate at the Carnegie Middle East Center, says of the ISIS threat and Lebanese politics is true of the entire region: “It’s a unifying factor, but not to the point where anyone is going to set aside their private agendas.” Sharing a common enemy will not make foes into friends. The broader the coalition, the more fragile it might be in the long haul.



And it will be a long haul. On that, nearly all the experts agree. Even if sufficient force is mustered to drive ISIS out of Iraq, al-Baghdadi's organization will continue to hold territory in war-torn Syria. The ongoing civil war, the ethnic divide and Assad's ruthless desire to prop up the most radical elements of the Syrian opposition all conspire against any hopes of eradicating ISIS. At the same time, ISIS seeds have been planted in other ungoverned lands, like Libya and the Sinai. "As long as the root problems are not addressed, the Islamic State is not going away," says Carnegie's Lund.

A FEELING OF DÉJÀ VU

THIS FEELS GRIMLY FAMILIAR. ONCE again, the West is gearing up for another go at the 3-D chessboard of Middle East conflict. And once again, the opening moves are clearer than the endgame.

There was a flap in Washington in mid-February when a State Department

spokeswoman named Marie Harf told a television interviewer that the ISIS problem ultimately stemmed from a lack of jobs. "We cannot kill our way out," she said. A ham-fisted attempt at a more complicated truth, Harf's diagnosis was widely mocked. But it's worth a moment's pause over what she said.

There is a deeper issue behind the ISIS ugliness, and there will be no true victory until that issue is dealt with. Civil society is collapsing in large parts of North Africa and the Middle East. The absence of competent government creates mass unemployment—there's the jobs issue—but it also creates resentment, suspicion, desperation and a sense of victimhood. And this is the nest in which terrorists are hatched.

As tricky as the military piece of the ISIS puzzle may be, it is simple compared with the civil-society piece. The U.S. showed in 1991 and again in 2003 that it knows how to take down enemies in Iraq. What it has never shown an ability to do is leave something better afterward.

Some might say this deeper problem should be left to the countries themselves to solve. But the history of Western interventions in the region has made self-help much harder than it might have been. The very idea of a nation called Iraq was a half-considered Western confection spun in the wake of World War I, and it doomed the region to a century of three competing peoples—Shi'ite, Sunni and Kurd—living miserably under one flag. To a significant extent, the bleeding Middle East is the West's own botched creation. Says Middle East analyst David Butter of the London-based think tank Chatham House: "The big question is, Have outside powers blundered around in the Middle East, doing too much or too little?" He answers his own question. "Having become very deeply involved in Iraq, they've made a lot of mistakes, underestimated and badly planned what they were going to do."

In an interview with TIME, Pakistan's Minister of Defense, Khawaja Asif, reflects bitterly on the high cost of the West's repeated failures to plan more deeply than the first easy steps of each new intervention. The tactics employed by ISIS are hardly worse than some of the outrages committed by the Taliban, Asif notes, which is to be expected because "the Taliban and ISIS

are just different franchises of the same phenomenon. They may be called different names in different places," he continues, but both "have the same culture, and their roots lie in the '80s when the Americans trained and funded these people through Pakistan to fight against the Soviet Union."

And it's true that some of the same *mujahedin* trained and armed by the U.S. to drive the Soviets out of Afghanistan went on to be founding fathers of modern jihadist terrorism—men like bin Laden and Mullah Omar, creator of the Taliban. No thought was given then to what would become of these battle-hardened fanatics after the West was done using them.

So "they keep on coming back to haunt us, fundamentally, and ultimately they also haunt the international peace and security," Asif says. "Especially after the Arab Spring that has turned into a long Arab Winter now," as governments from Libya to Yemen have essentially ceased to exist. "The result has been that the situation is far worse today. They are threatening the entire region: Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan."

Asif knows his history. This cycle of rash beginnings and unplanned ends may make Americans feel as if decisive action is being taken, but the results are clear: it isn't working. And ISIS is taunting the world to run the cycle one more time. Put an army on the road to Mosul and let the rest take care of itself.

But that's a trap. As bad as these people are, there is room for things to get much worse. And they will unless the U.S. and its latest coalition have the discipline at last to think all the way through to the end. The question is not beating ISIS. It's what comes after that. More than ever, that question needs an answer. —WITH REPORTING BY SUHA MAAYEH/AMMAN; MOHAMMED AL SAADI/BAGHDAD; THANASSIS CAMBANIS, REBECCA COLLARD AND MOHAMMAD GHANNAM/BEIRUT; CHARLOTTE MCDONALD-GIBSON/BRUSSELS; JARED MALSIN/CAIRO; ARYN BAKER/CAPE TOWN; PIOTR ZALEWSKI/ISTANBUL; NAINA BAJEKAL, CONAL URQUHART AND OMAR WARAICH/LONDON; NIKHIL KUMAR/NEW DELHI; KARL VICK/NEW YORK CITY; VIVIENNE WALT/PARIS; KAY ARMIN SERJOIE/TEHRAN; MASSIMO CALABRESI, MICHAEL SCHERER AND MARK THOMPSON/WASHINGTON ■

SHOULD THE U.S. SEND GROUND TROOPS TO FIGHT ISIS?

YES. UPROOT THE ENEMY

BY MAX BOOT

DURING AN ADDRESS TO THE NATION THAT HE delivered from the White House in September, President Obama vowed to “degrade and ultimately destroy” ISIS. The only thing that has been degraded and destroyed in the intervening months, however, is the credibility of the U.S.

U.S.-led air strikes have killed more than 6,000 ISIS fighters. But those losses have been more than made good by the stream of 1,000 foreign fighters who are estimated to join ISIS every month. ISIS’s snuff films, like one showing a Jordanian pilot being burned alive, may trigger widespread repugnance, but they also have a sick appeal to a dismayingly large number of young Muslim men who thrill at the chance to establish a new caliphate.

ISIS is not going to run out of cannon fodder anytime soon, and the U.S. approach, limited to air strikes, has shown scant ability to dislodge ISIS from its strongholds, especially in Syria, where ISIS has expanded its zone of control over the past six months. For air strikes to work, they need to be launched in coordination with an effective ground force, but that has been mostly lacking.

The only real exceptions are the Kurdish *peshmerga* fighters and the Iranian-backed Shi’ite militias. But neither the Kurds nor the Shi’ites will be able to clear and hold Sunni areas stretching from Fallujah to Mosul. Indeed, the more that bloodthirsty Iranian-backed militias gain prominence in the anti-ISIS cause, the more Sunnis will rally to ISIS as defenders of their embattled community.

Back in 2007–08, when al-Qaeda in Iraq, ISIS’s precursor, was pushed out of the Sunni-dominated northwest of Iraq, it was by Sunni tribal fighters working in conjunction with American troops. To inflict serious setbacks on ISIS today will require resurrecting that successful coalition rather than flatly refusing, as Obama has done, to put any “boots on the ground.”

It is in America’s interest to send as few troops as possible into harm’s way and to get our allies to do as much of the fighting as possible. But sending only 3,000 troops and essentially prohibiting them from leaving base, as Obama has done, is a recipe for ineffectiveness. If we’re going to have any impact on the fight against ISIS, we need to take off our self-imposed shackles.

It’s hard to know now what commitment may be necessary, which is why it’s vital not to pass an Authorization for the Use of Military Force that would prohibit “enduring offensive ground combat operations.” It is folly to tell ISIS in advance that it has nothing to fear from the best ground troops on the planet.

Credible estimates of how many troops we should send range from 10,000 to 25,000. Just as important as the troop numbers are the rules of engagement under which

they operate. It is imperative that U.S. advisers and joint tactical air controllers be able to operate on the front lines with the local troops they support. This was the formula that made possible the rapid overthrow of the Taliban in Afghanistan in the fall of 2001.

In addition to sending advisers along with support personnel to protect and sustain them, we should be sending joint Special Operations task forces—composed of Navy SEALs, Army Delta Force and other Tier 1 operators—to target ISIS as they once did so successfully with al-Qaeda in Iraq. While aircraft can drop bombs and kill people, only commandos can capture and interrogate high-level terrorists, gathering intelligence that has the potential to wipe out an entire enemy network.

With a slightly larger commitment of American forces, we might be able to galvanize more local opposition to ISIS in Syria and Iraq. But we need to be careful not to make the U.S. the enabler of Shi’ite death squads working at the behest of Iran’s General Qasem Soleimani, the commander of the country’s far-reaching, elite Quds Force. The entire Iraqi army may be so badly compromised by militia infiltration that it is better to focus American efforts on persuading the Sunni tribes of Syria and Iraq to join forces against ISIS. Baghdad—and Soleimani—might not approve, but the U.S. must ignore those concerns. Without the support of the Sunni tribes, the West will face an impossible task in the war against ISIS.

Boot, a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, is the author of Invisible Armies: An Epic History of Guerrilla Warfare From Ancient Times to the Present



NO. DON'T TAKE THE BAIT

BY KARL VICK

IN DECEMBER 2001, WHEN THE WAR ON TERRORISM was only weeks old, victory appeared at hand with the fall of Kandahar, the southern Afghanistan city Osama bin Laden had called home. Now that the question is how best to confront a fresh horror, it's worth noting that the city was taken not by U.S. troops but by the same tag team that liberated the rest of the country: scruffy Afghan militias advancing in pickup trucks behind U.S. airstrikes. As Christmas approached, there couldn't have been more than 50 Americans in town, most of them Special Forces so at home in local clothes that they were easier to spot by the bumper stickers on their pickups: I ♥ NY. The rest of us were reporters haunting public venues like the central market, where one morning I noticed a man standing apart. He wore a black turban and a knowing look, both markers of the Taliban, and had a question. "Why didn't you come on the ground?" he said. "It would have been lovely if you came on the ground."

I knew what he meant, but not nearly as viscerally as I did two years later, in Iraq, where we came on the ground. Why we came at all is a bit of a mystery, but it was pretty clear pretty early that our physical presence created its own reality, armored up yet vulnerable both to labels—"occupier" at best, but also "crusader"—and constant ambush. "If you're trying to win hearts and minds," a Marine major told me in Najaf, "maybe sending 100,000 19-year-olds with machine guns isn't the best way to go about it."



Drawing down
A National Guard battalion stationed in Iraq begins the journey back to the U.S. in August 2010

Not massing U.S. troops in Afghanistan after 9/11 was a masterstroke, even if it came about mainly because the Pentagon lacked a ready war plan for the country that had sheltered bin Laden. It's not just that Afghanistan has a way of swallowing armies. (Ask the British; ask the Russians.) There is an essential elegance to using what the military calls standoff weapons in a fight made infinitely more difficult by your actual presence. Which is why it's fortunate that Americans have shown little appetite for a large-scale ground war against ISIS.

The group was, after all, spawned by the occupation of Iraq. Many of its leaders are veterans of the U.S. military prisons that turned out to double as universities for jihad. But their aim is no longer to expel the invader. Just the opposite. Now they want to lure us in. The fundamentalist narrative embraced by ISIS calls for a return of U.S. forces to Iraq, modern legionnaires fulfilling the role of "Rome" in the end-time narrative the group believes it has set in motion. It's a millennialist vision as complicated as the Book of Revelation, but the U.S. role is pretty simple: show up. For anyone seeking a logic behind the gruesome decapitations of American journalists and aid workers, there it is—provoke a reaction.

The bloodletting does summon the associations of terrorism, barbarity and peril that have beset Americans for more than a decade now. But associations are almost all they are. To date, ISIS has demonstrated no particular ambition to attack the West at home. (That remains the *raison d'être* of al-Qaeda, whose Syria affiliate Jabhat al-Nusra harbors the elite al-Qaeda bombmakers dubbed the Khorasan group.) ISIS eyes another prize. Having declared a caliphate on the river valleys and desert land it has conquered in Syria and Iraq, it aims to turn the clock back to the 7th century. It functions both as a government and as a sectarian killing machine, slaughtering Shi'ites and many others in the name of purification.

To retain its sense of inevitability, however, ISIS must expand—something it's been unable to do in Iraq since U.S. air strikes began in August. Recent growth, such as it is, has all been virtual, via pledges of fealty from existing jihadi groups in Sinai, Libya and other ungoverned dots on the map. The mother ship itself is hemmed in. Shi'ites and Kurds man the bulwarks to the east. To the west lie Syrian state forces that ISIS—nominally a rebel group—has mostly left alone.

What to do? The U.S. clearly has a national interest in preserving Iraq. (We broke it; we bought it.) But sending Americans back into Anbar and Saladin provinces would provide ISIS with pure oxygen and fresh waves of volunteers, while feeding the narrative that the U.S. is in a war against Islam. We have the planes, but this looks like a fight for guys in pickups who want to take their own country back.

Vick is a TIME editor at large and was previously the Jerusalem bureau chief



WONDERS OF THE WORLD

A Burst Of Energy

INSIDE THE WORLD'S LARGEST
SOLAR POWER PLANT

BY JOSH SANBURN



Desert oasis *The plant's
8 million solar panels power
about 160,000 California homes*

Photographs by Jamey Stillings for TIME



On the grid Desert Sunlight Solar Farm produces 550 megawatts of energy, equal to the output of a conventional power plant

AT THE EDGE OF THE MOJAVE Desert, about 80 miles (130 km) east of Palm Springs, Calif., millions of midnight blue solar panels stretch to the horizon, angled toward the sky like reclining sunbathers. Here, the sun has few enemies. It shines at least 300 days of the year, bathing the more than 8 million photovoltaic (PV) panels at the Desert Sunlight Solar Farm in daylong streams of rays. All that free sunlight is converted into electricity that flows into California's thirsty power grid, eventually helping charge iPhones in Los Angeles and switch on TVs in Sacramento.

The possibility of solar power on such a massive scale seemed remote just a decade ago. Solar was seen as a small solution to small problems, a novel way for your environmentally minded neighbor to show off his green credentials, yet too expensive to ever be economical. But that's changed as a dramatic increase in solar-panel production—brought about by a global expansion in manufacturing capacity—has sent costs plummeting. Increasingly efficient second-generation solar technology can squeeze more energy from the sun's rays at a lower cost, and the

federal government has opened vast tracts of public land to massive for-profit ventures like Desert Sunlight.

As a result, solar power in America has officially grown up. The two largest solar power plants in the world—Desert Sunlight and Topaz Solar Farm, about 400 miles (640 km) to the west in central California—have come online in the past three months. While the first U.S. solar plant, built in 1982, generated 1 megawatt of electricity, Desert Sunlight generates 550 megawatts. Topaz produces the same amount. Together their impact on carbon emissions is equivalent to taking 130,000 cars off the road while providing 340,000 homes with clean energy. “These projects [are] the first utility-scale projects that are really on the scale of a conventional coal or nuclear power plant,” says Harry Atwater, a professor of applied physics at the California Institute of Technology.

Utility-scale solar plants were nowhere to be found on public lands just a few years ago, in part because it was too costly to build them. Desert Sunlight, which was officially dedicated Feb. 9 on 3,800 acres (1,540 hectares) of land administered by the Bureau of Land Management, is now the sixth operational solar plant on federal property. Twenty-nine other solar proj-

ects have been approved for public lands, and eight are currently under construction in California and Nevada. And there's room for more. The federal government administers almost 250 million acres (101 million hectares) of U.S. territory, roughly one-ninth of the country, most of it in the West and much of it desert with abundant sunlight—perfect for millions of photon-hungry solar panels.

“When the [Obama] Administration came on board, it was clear that clean energy was a priority,” says Ray Brady, manager of the National Renewable Energy Office for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), who notes that the Department of the Interior met its target of generating 10,000 megawatts of solar energy in 2012, three years ahead of schedule. (The department has approved more than 16,000 solar megawatts.) “Desert Sunlight was very important in meeting that goal.”

But getting the location right was critical. Utility-scale solar plants need to be somewhere with year-round sun, in a space large enough to hold hundreds of thousands of solar modules but close enough to civilization to easily connect to the energy grid. Desert Sunlight sits just outside Desert Center (pop. 204), a tiny town southeast of Joshua Tree National

HE DIDN'T VANISH
WITHOUT LEAVING A TRACE

FINDING JESUS

FAITH FACT FORGERY



SUNDAYS 9^P_{ET/PT}

Park. Average high temperature in July: 104°F (40°C). In January: 65°F (18°C). Average annual rainfall: 4 in. (10 cm). “It’d be safe to say just about every day you’re going to get some sunlight,” says Steve Krum, a spokesman for First Solar, which built and operates the plant.

The site’s millions of 2-by-4-ft. (0.6 by 1.2 m) panels are each covered by a thin film of glass that absorbs sunlight and captures electrons, creating an electrical current that flows into wires in the back of each module. That energy is converted from DC power into usable AC power by inverters and is sent to the electrical grid via a nearby substation. Each panel generates approximately 90 to 100 watts.

Desert Sunlight originated at a time when engineers were just figuring out how to produce solar panels on a mass scale. In the past, panels were often made using silicon, which tended to yield more energy but were expensive and difficult

energy output, recording the highest efficiency standards so far for any thin-film technology.

A New Model

JUDGING BY ITS SCALE AND LOCATION ON thousands of acres of public land, Desert Sunlight seems like other sprawling, ambitious government projects before it, a Hoover Dam for the age of climate change. But the development of the plant says a lot about the new way many public-works projects are built in the U.S. today.

Desert Sunlight was the brainchild of private firm OptiSolar (later acquired by First Solar), which saw a market opportunity in helping California’s utility companies meet tough state mandates to produce a third of their energy from renewable sources by 2020. (The state currently gets 20% of its energy from renewables.) Desert Sunlight was supported by a loan guarantee from the Department of Energy

The Future of Solar

THE BIG QUESTION IS WHETHER PROJECTS this large are sustainable. As the price of oil and natural gas continues to drop, solar energy looks less desirable as other sources become more affordable in the short term. First Solar’s stock, for example, has dipped as oil prices have decreased. The BLM’s Brady says that while there are a number of solar projects in the works, applications for large projects on federal lands have fallen significantly.

Federal support is also drying up. A 30% federal investment tax credit will decrease to 10% by 2016. California, meanwhile, is on track to meet the state-mandated standards of 33% renewable energy by 2020. But once it does, that could reduce the incentive to continue producing solar in the state unless a tighter goal is mandated.

The energy business itself is also changing. As photovoltaic technology has

Here Comes The Sun

8 million

Number of solar panels at the Desert Sunlight Solar Farm

3,800

Total number of acres occupied by the solar plant, which sits on federal land in the California desert

52

Number of utility-scale renewable-energy projects approved on public lands since 2009, including 29 solar power plants

160,000

Approximate number of homes powered by Desert Sunlight

Sources: U.S. Department of the Interior; First Solar

to mass-produce. But First Solar, which is based in Tempe, Ariz., and bought the rights to Desert Sunlight in 2010, has shied away from silicon and instead produces “thin-film” panels made with cadmium telluride, which can be cheaper than silicon but less efficient in converting sunlight into energy.

The favorable economics of thin-film PV work only if silicon remains expensive. In 2011, the price of silicon began falling rapidly, as cheap, government-subsidized Chinese PV panels flooded the market. Solyndra, a solar-energy company championing what it believed were innovative and more efficient panels made of cylindrical tubes, became a punching bag for conservatives after cheap silicon forced the company to declare bankruptcy in 2011 despite a \$500 million loan guarantee from the federal government. But First Solar, which makes its solar modules in the U.S. and Malaysia, is betting on its automated, in-house production and less-expensive components to insulate it from fluctuations in the market. The company also successfully increased its panels’

worth \$1.5 billion, but the plant is owned by NextEra Energy Resources, GE Energy Financial Services and Sumitomo Corporation of America, while the actual facility was built by First Solar. That means the world’s largest solar farm was conceived by private business that profited from tighter state environmental regulations, with their costs underwritten in part by a federal incentive program.

It’s a model that appears to be paying off. Solar is now a \$15 billion business in the U.S., employing more people than coal mining, even as costs continue to decrease. Solar panels, for example, are twice as cheap as they were four years ago. In 2014, solar energy accounted for 36% of the country’s installed new energy capacity, according to the Solar Energy Industries Association. “It’s hard to convey how this industry has gone from being like a small jewelry business to a bricks-and-mortar paving business,” Atwater says. “And when Desert Sunlight was conceived, I think people thought it was this ambitious California thing to do and wasn’t very economical. But now it’s economical.”

gotten cheaper and energy meters have gotten smarter, it’s now possible to build a more distributed grid where electricity is generated on a smaller scale, house by house. SolarCity, for example, which designs and installs residential solar panels, has allowed individuals to drastically lower their electric bills through PV panels attached to their roofs—and often at prices that are next to nothing.

All of which means that solar power may succeed without more utility-scale projects like Desert Sunlight coming online. First Solar has plans to build a 750-megawatt plant in Riverside, Calif., even bigger than Desert Sunlight or Topaz. But so far, only 200 megawatts of energy have been purchased. First Solar’s Krum says that he doesn’t expect many more large solar stations to come online anytime soon. Future plants may end up being half the size of these new behemoths.

Desert Sunlight is undoubtedly a wonder, a glittering oasis in the desert that is the first of its kind. And as it turns out, it may also be the last. ■

THE WONDER LIST

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Go there.
Before it's gone.

DOG INTERRUPTED

The animal mind is a complex thing.
But there is new hope for
nonhumans suffering from human-like
psychological problems

BY JEFFREY KLUGER

BUDDIE CAN'T AFFORD TO MISS TAKING HIS meds—and it's not easy to keep all of them straight. There is the milligram of Xanax he gets every six to eight hours. There are the 30 mg of Prozac he takes daily. There used to be Valium and Ativan, but he moved on to other things when they weren't helping.

Clearly, Buddie has issues, and the fact that he's a dog doesn't make them easier to watch. A 13-year-old beagle-sheltie mix, he has been suffering periodic panic attacks since he was 10. The episodes usually begin with his leaping up as if he's been bitten. He then spends days in a state of agitation and terror—with his family utterly helpless to make him feel better.

"He can't be verbally interrupted when

this happens," says his owner Gail Puntin, a clinical social worker in Tyringham, Mass. "It usually lasts four to five days."

Out of options, Puntin has brought Buddie to the Foster Hospital for Small Animals on the campus of Tufts University in North Grafton, Mass., a place known archly among some pet owners as Last Resort Nation. "So many people come in and say, 'If you can't fix this problem, I'm going to have to put this animal to sleep,'" says Nick Dodman, director of Tufts' animal behavior department of clinical sciences. In addition to overseeing the work of the department, Dodman is the personal physician to many of the animals brought to the clinic, and he has just added Buddie to his patient load. "Buddie has a pretty long

chart," Dodman says, flipping through the dog's medical records. "But I won't know what we can do for him until I see him."

As a society, we've come a long way in appreciating the importance of mental health and the need to address mental illness in humans. Now, thanks to advances in areas like biology, genetics and neuroscience, we are learning more about the vulnerabilities of the animal mind. It isn't easy: only the animals know what they're feeling, and they're not saying. But the mind of a human baby is unknowable too, and we still learn a lot by watching. We know when a baby is happy, when it's sad, when it's frightened. If a baby could lose its mind, we'd be able to intuit that too.

So it is with animals. And it turns out



Gainfully employed

A service dog for an autistic boy, Radar stays busy—and is likely happy

the ones we encounter closely enough to observe have more reasons to go to pieces than others. Animals in the wild live the lives they're intended to live. Animals that are forced to interact with humans live very different ones—in zoos, circuses, amusement parks. They are kept on farms, in stables and labs, living in cages, pens and crates. Even the ones that are cosseted in our homes spend much of their time confined indoors when every scrap of DNA they have is telling them to be out in a field or forest. So some of them go nuts.

Animals in zoos sway and pace and sink into languor. Chickens on industrial farms peck one another to death. Tilikum the orca lived up to the “killer whale” misnomer by which his species is known when he dragged Dawn Brancheau, a 40-year-old trainer at SeaWorld, to her death in 2010. Gus the polar bear, the famed attraction at the Central Park Zoo in New York City until his death in 2013, swam in robotic laps back and forth in a small pool from which he realized there was no escape.

It's the animals we know the best, however—the ones that become part of our families—that touch us most, which overwhelmingly means dogs and cats and birds. Parrots in cages tear at their own feathers. Abused dogs retreat in terror at the sight of a human hand. Cats and dogs engage in what appears to be obsessive-compulsive behavior, licking a patch of fur over and over until it becomes infected. Animals exhibit night terrors, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), separation anxiety, hoarding, depression and more. Increasingly, veterinarians are realizing that animal brains operate in many of the same ways human brains do—which means they can break down the same ways as well.

Fifteen years ago, says Bonnie Beaver of Texas A&M University and the executive director of the American College of Veterinary Behaviorists, nearly anyone wanting to bring a pet to an animal psychologist could book an appointment within a week. “Everyone practicing now,” she says, “has a waiting list 2½ to three months long.”

Reading the Signs

THE BEAST HAS NOT BEEN BORN THAT CAN fill out a personality survey, which means we must lean heavily on observation—an admittedly imperfect method. But biology is biology, and it operates in a fixed number of ways. “A dog is the same bunch of chemicals we are,” says Marc Bekoff, professor emeritus of ecology and evolutionary biology

at the University of Colorado at Boulder. “All mammals share the same structures in the limbic system for emotions.”

It goes even deeper than that. Dodman has published a paper in which he reports finding a gene in Doberman pinschers that is associated with a breed-specific form of obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) involving compulsively nursing on an object like a blanket or a part of their body.

To Dodman, that looked like the human condition known as pica, which involves a compulsive need to mouth or eat nonedible things. And pica, in turn, is associated with hoarding, another frequent expression of OCD. When Dodman put afflicted Dobermans inside a magnetic resonance imager, he noticed abnormal levels of activity in the right anterior insula—the same place all those same behaviors are mediated in the human brain.

Just as with human brains, animal brains can have their levels of the neurotransmitter serotonin elevated by antidepressants, reducing symptoms. But again, as with humans, not every animal is a good candidate for every medication. Long, lanky dogs like greyhounds and whippets—the so-called sight hounds,

because they hunt primarily with vision and speed—can be especially tricky. “They are notorious for having different metabolisms and being hit very hard by drugs,” says Dodman.

Overall, according to Beaver, only a minority of animals are helped by taking drugs, but that's better than none at all. What's more, the way drugs are tested for humans actually gives nonhumans a head start. “Because most medications that come to market have gone through animal studies,” says Beaver, “we have some background on them.”

There are limits to the parallels between human and animal patients, of course. Take those constantly grooming cats. They seem to be exhibiting OCD—a legitimate diagnosis, but only till it isn't. Beaver likes to talk about a 2006 study in which researchers wanted to investigate this so-called psychogenic grooming. They gathered a group of 21 symptomatic cats, but before the study could proceed, the animals had to be screened for dermatological diseases to rule out problems as straightforward as a rash. The result? “Nineteen of 21 cats had a dermat problem,” says Beaver.

This kind of misinterpretation bedevils pet owners too. A dog exhibits all the signs of sadness, so humans determine that it must be feeling sad. “But just because the animal has their head down does not necessarily mean they're sad,” says Beaver. “They may have a headache. We don't even know if they get a headache.”

Birdsong, similarly, sounds happy to us, so we assume that's how the bird feels. But a song to our ears may be a threat or territorial claim to another bird, and a canary in a cage has a lot to feel threatened about. “In trying to understand what's going on in an animal's mind,” says Beaver, “we have to view it through filters that limit our capacity to understand.”

Talk Therapy—Sort Of

STILL, VERY OFTEN THE DIAGNOSIS IS CORRECT. The question is, Then what? Pet owners rarely want to use medication as a first resort, and that makes sense. Sometimes the easiest intervention is what's known as enrichment, or improving the animal's surroundings. This is often used in zoos, memorably with Gus, who was given toys to play with as well as food frozen in blocks of ice that he had to work to reach and eat—a more engaging way to get his dinner than simply being tossed a fish.

“We say we're going to make them work for their food,” says Valerie Hare,

IS YOUR DOG TROUBLED?

Diagnosing psychological ills in animals is an imprecise science, but here are some canine clues

- ☐ Wanders aimlessly
- ☐ Stares into space or at walls
- ☐ Appears lost or confused in the house or yard
- ☐ Has difficulty finding doors; stands at hinge side of door; stands at wrong door to go outside
- ☐ Does not recognize familiar people
- ☐ Does not respond to verbal cues or name
- ☐ Solicits attention less often
- ☐ Is less enthusiastic upon greeting
- ☐ Sleeps more overall in a 24-hour day
- ☐ Has accidents indoors after having been housebroken
- ☐ Gets stuck or confused in corners or under or behind furniture
- ☐ Appears to forget the reason for going outdoors

Scoring: Even a few check marks are cause for worry. Five or more usually means trouble. A dog's age may determine if treatment is worthwhile



Looks can deceive *A grumpy-looking Himalayan may actually be happy—or not*

head of the nonprofit group Shape of Enrichment, which consults with zoos, farms and other operations. “But if they don’t do the work, we’re still going to feed them. We’re giving them a sense of control over some aspects of their environment.”

For house pets—particularly those living in apartments—a similar strategy might involve more activity-stimulating toys or simply more time outside. When one family came to Dodman with an anxious border collie, he recommended enrolling the dog in a herding class, which is what it would be doing if it lived in the semiwild of a farm anyway.

Other kinds of behavior therapy can take more time. Dogs returning from war zones exhibit signs of PTSD—jumpiness, anxiety, poor sleep, loss of appetite—and how could they not? An explosion is an explosion whether you’re a canine or a human, and repeated explosions take their toll. So too does the smell of blood and an environment of fear and combat. Making the animals feel safe again can involve a lot of time spent just being with them, tending to them and backing off when they need time to themselves.

Tilikum the whale might be the animal world’s most notorious PTSD survivor, with not one but three deaths on his rap sheet. In 1991, a trainer fell into his tank, and he and two other orcas drowned

her. In 1999, a dead man was found lying across Tilikum’s back, having apparently entered the water-park grounds at night. No one knows how the man died, but the incident did not do much for Tilikum’s rep.

But if Tilikum turned bad, he had reason. He was only 2 when his family was slaughtered and he was captured. He spent the next year in a small cement tank in Iceland and has spent every year since in bigger pools that still do not remotely resemble the ocean he called home. Messing with powerful emotions in a powerful animal was never going to end well.

“Considering all those factors,” says behavioral biologist Toni Frohoff, a co-author of the book *Dolphin Mysteries*, “the fact that there’s any remnant of a functional orca in him could be a testament to his strength.”

The same is true of smaller animals. The pit bulls who were rescued from the dogfighting ring operated by NFL player Michael Vick were put through a rehabilitation that consisted mostly of teaching them to trust the new people they were getting to know. They may never be able to engage with other dogs, especially other pit bulls, since they were bred to fight one another in the first place. For some of them, any recovery may be impossible. The ideal period for socialization of a dog comes very early in its life—at 4 to 8 weeks of age. Filling that period with terror and

pain may simply leave too much emotional scar tissue behind.

“Dogs that have been mentally abused, that have been beaten, may be desocialized,” says Beaver. “They passed that golden time period when socialization occurs.”

Endgame

ULTIMATELY, THE SIMPLE MATTER OF AGE will claim all pets. Loss of hearing, poor vision, aching joints and deteriorating cognitive function have the same effect on an animal’s mood as they have on a human’s—and it’s not good. Dodman spent his first session with Buddie mostly observing his 13-year-old patient and talking to Puntin about Buddie’s behavior.

The preliminary diagnosis was bad: the problem was likely related to seizures caused by a slow-growing brain tumor. It would explain the geriatric onset of the behavior and the fact that it is inconsistent with a dog who historically had an even temperament. An MRI would settle the diagnosis, but an MRI costs \$800, and there would be nothing to do about a tumor even if one were discovered. Buddie has already lived past the 11-to-12-year life expectancy for a dog of his size and mix. “I want to treat him conservatively, given his age,” Puntin decided, and Dodman agreed.

Anti-inflammatories for Buddie’s arthritic hips would help, allowing him to play more. And an anticonvulsant could help eliminate or at least ease the seizures. “He’s a good old dog,” Dodman says, patting him. “You want to keep him comfortable.”

End-of-life care is not enough for other, younger pets—ones with many years of potentially happy life ahead of them, if only their unhappy minds would permit it. Ideally, all domesticated animals would be able to end their days like Alex, the famed gray parrot that died in 2007 at age 31 and was raised from chickhood by animal psychologist Irene Pepperberg, who taught him 100 words and made him a go-to case for people studying the animal mind.

On the last night of Alex’s life, according to his obituary in the *New York Times* (yes, Alex had an obituary in the *New York Times*), Pepperberg was covering his cage and he said, “You be good. See you tomorrow. I love you.” He was found dead the next morning, but he had lived happily, and as far as can ever be known, he died peacefully. Buddie—and every other animal whose lot has been cast with us—deserves the same chance. —WITH REPORTING BY DAVID BJERKLE AND ANDRÉA FORD/NEW YORK CITY ■

CULTURE

STAYING IN VOGUE

MADONNA'S BOLD NEW ALBUM
REBEL HEART SHOWS THAT FOR
THE QUEEN OF REINVENTION, THE
MORE THINGS CHANGE, THE MORE
THEY STAY THE SAME
BY SAM LANSKY

ON A RECENT EVENING IN NEW YORK CITY, THE SINGER MADONNA was camped out at the headquarters of the famed auction house Sotheby's. In recent years, many masterpieces have passed through its walls—Edvard Munch's *The Scream* sold there for \$119.9 million in 2012, setting a world record—but with an estimated wealth of \$800 million, Madonna is probably the most valuable icon to take up temporary residence there. She's definitely the most famous. And at 56, she's also one of the youngest. These days, it's not often that Madonna is the youngest artist anywhere.

That hasn't slowed her down. In a flatteringly lit studio, she's already set out a bottle of tequila and shot glasses to play a drinking game with reporters. (The rules: You take a shot if you ask a question she thinks is bad. She takes a shot if she gives a bad answer—but she's the judge of that.)





Hitting her stride
*Madonna backstage at
the 57th annual Grammy
Awards on Feb. 8*

She's staged her very own art exhibition here for a day of interviews. The space is crowded with works of art by Jean-Michel Basquiat and Andy Warhol, many from her personal collection.

"This is a Keith Haring," she says, pointing at a painting over her shoulder. "He made it for me." Surely those pieces must have traveled by armored truck, flanked by bodyguards? She cocks her head. "No," she says. "I just brought them in my car."

It's classic Madonna: fireworks set off with a "who, me?" nonchalance. But giving interviews in a space filled with priceless works created by her friends—some of the most famous artists of the 20th century—may also be a sly way of asserting her dominance. It reminds the world that while Lady Gaga pals around with Jeff Koons and Marina Abramovic, and Miley Cyrus exhibits sculptures at Art Basel, there is only one pop star still at work who rolled with Warhol.

Madonna's new album *Rebel Heart*, out March 10, offers a lot of reminders of her extraordinary legacy. After two scatter-shot albums—the urban-leaning *Hard Candy* in 2008 and *MDNA*'s trendy dance-pop in 2012—*Rebel Heart* marks a return to form; it's her best album in a decade. The in-demand hitmaker Diplo, who has produced songs for Beyoncé and Pharrell Williams, worked extensively on *Rebel Heart*. After clocking many hours in the studio with Madonna, Diplo remains reverent.

"No one stands this long," he says. "All the women start with Madonna. No matter where you come from, no matter what you're doing now—if you're a powerful woman, the genesis is Madonna."

Her power is palpable, but in person,

she is friendlier than you might expect—there's a warmth to her magnetism. To her, she's an artist among artists, talking expansively about other performers and producers, both on and off her album. Likewise, the pieces she's displaying at Sotheby's aren't just trophies; they're a part of her personal history.

"The beginning of my career in New York was the convergence of graffiti art and pop culture, hip-hop and breakdancing," she says. "Warhol and Haring and Basquiat, we all hung out together. We all supported each other. We used to have Friday-night dinners at these Japanese restaurants on the Lower East Side. Decades later, I say, 'Where are my peers?' Even though we're under the illusion that we're brought together by the Internet and social networking, we don't have that community where artists are supporting one another."

She's fired up. "All art has become more commoditized. Everything has become generic and homogenized. If the majority of artists follow a formula, who's pushing the envelope? Who's trailblazing? Who's being revolutionary in their thinking?" She settles back in her seat. "That's what art is supposed to do." After 32 years, that's still what Madonna is trying to do too.

Hack Attack

A DAY LATER, SHE'S AT THE MIDTOWN Manhattan offices of Interscope Records, her distribution partner since 2011, though her primary contract is through the media company Live Nation, which signed her to a 10-year multirights deal in 2007 worth a rumored \$120 million. Here the walls are lined with the hit records of other artists, most of

whom weren't alive when she released her first single.

Born Madonna Louise Ciccone in Bay City, Mich., in 1958, she moved to New York City to pursue a career as a dancer, then rose to fame in the mid-'80s with hits such as "Like a Virgin" and "Papa Don't Preach." As her career developed, a new image and a new sensibility came with each new endeavor. She's often called the queen of reinvention, and while that's true, there's more that's stayed the same over her lengthy career—even after two marriages, four kids and dozens of creative projects. There's a willingness to experiment with surprising musical influences, from the British electronica of *Ray of Light* to the disco throwback of *Confessions on a Dance Floor*. She's always been passionate about social justice. As a longtime champion of gay rights, she recently rallied behind the Russian activist punk group Pussy Riot. Her flair for courting controversy, too, remains unchanged. Decades after the Vatican condemned her "Like a Prayer" video, she still makes front-page news—like at the Brit Awards on Feb. 25, when she took a nasty fall while performing, then triumphantly finished the number.

"I'm pretty consistent. Predictable, almost," she says. "You can't stay relevant unless you're pushing yourself out onto the razor's edge of life on a regular basis. Once you become comfortable, you become complacent. If you become complacent, then you don't want to throw yourself into the icy cold water. You just want to sit in the sun."

Though she's always been experimental with the sound of her music, often roping in unknown producers and using sonic palettes rarely heard on Top 40

WHO'S THAT GIRL

MADONNA'S MANY INCARNATIONS

1984

LIKE A VIRGIN

The title track and "Material Girl" proved the singer's appetite for provocation

1986

TRUE BLUE

Largely inspired by her marriage to Sean Penn, this album was moody and ballad-heavy

1989

LIKE A PRAYER

Tackling Catholicism and divorce, it was her most sophisticated effort yet

1994

BEDTIME STORIES

After the *Erotica* backlash, Madonna decided to sample R&B influences

1992

EROTICA

A relative misfire commercially, this album was a dark meditation on sexuality

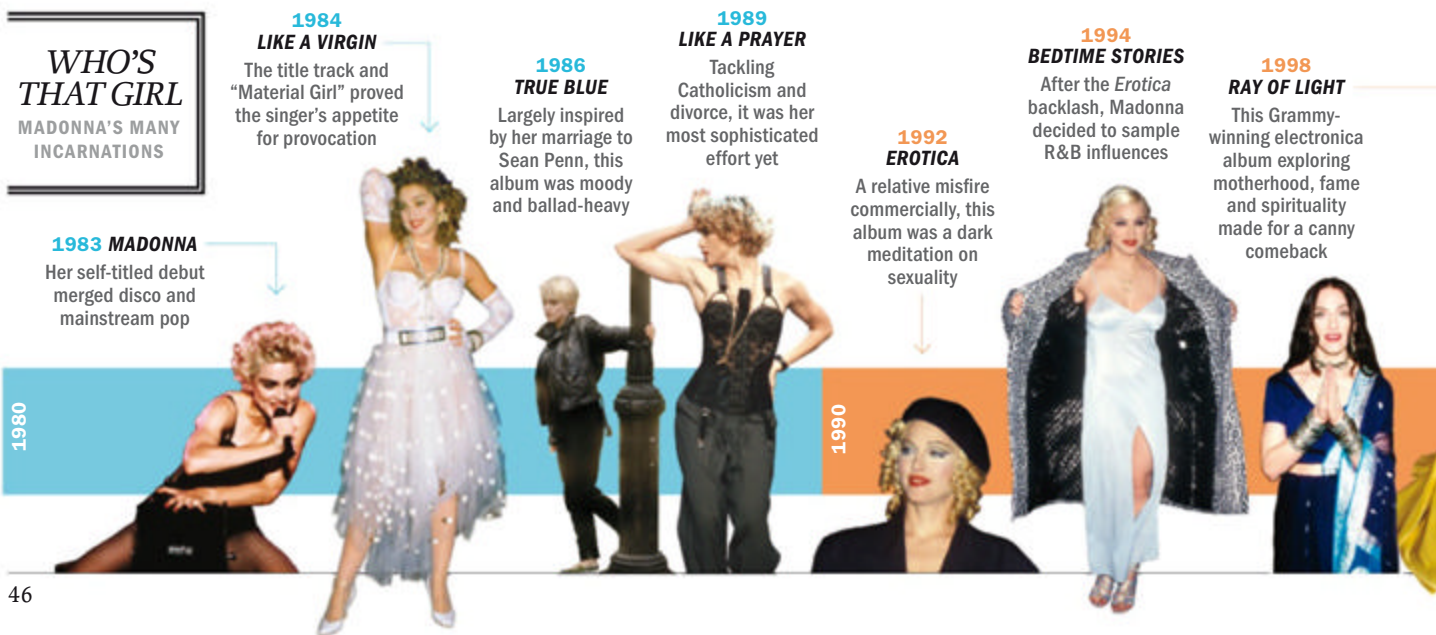
1998

RAY OF LIGHT

This Grammy-winning electronica album exploring motherhood, fame and spirituality made for a canny comeback

1983 MADONNA

Her self-titled debut merged disco and mainstream pop



radio, never before has she needed to be so reactive with how she brings her music to the public. When 13 demos from her *Rebel Heart* recording sessions leaked online in December—the result of an international hack—she quickly finished several of those songs and released them on iTunes as a six-track EP available when one pre-ordered the entire album. The album was then scheduled for an official release in March. But a week later, another deluge of leaks hit the web—rough versions of every song planned for *Rebel Heart* and then some. Madonna took to Instagram, calling it “artistic rape.” The FBI was called, and eventually authorities arrested an Israeli man for the hack. It upended her plans.

“Aside from the violation of having something stolen from me, suddenly people were making comments on songs I had no intention of releasing,” she says. “I thought, ‘Oh my God, I have to push myself into overdrive.’ I didn’t sleep for weeks. I didn’t see my kids. It was pandemonium, confusion, paranoia, hysteria.”

With her album circulating illegally online, she had to get creative. So for the lead single, “Living for Love,” a triumphant disco anthem with elements of ’90s house music, she chose to release the music video on the messaging app Snapchat, making her the first major artist to do so. She’s driving sales of *Rebel Heart* through a promotion with the gay hookup app Grindr—a cheap trick, though effective. But she’s not afraid of making headlines the old-fashioned way either. On the red carpet of this year’s Grammy Awards, wearing a provocative Givenchy bodysuit, she flashed her thonged buttocks to photographers. The photos went viral.

Rebel Art

THE POP MARKETPLACE HAS SHIFTED countless times since the start of Madonna’s career; as always, upstarts are crowding out the veterans. Even the most recent albums by Britney Spears and Christina Aguilera, the heaviest hitters from the last generation of pop divas who claim Madonna as inspiration, underperformed on the charts (No. 4 and No. 7, respectively), while younger artists like Taylor Swift and Ariana Grande enjoyed No. 1 albums in 2014. Madonna knows she can’t succeed purely on the basis of her icon status. Just how big a dent the hack made in her potential sales remains to be seen, but either way, she’s pulling out all the stops in the hopes that this album resonates both with adults who remember *Desperately Seeking Susan* and with kids who can’t remember a time before Snapchat.

As ever, she rejects wholesale the idea that she’s too old to be a pop star. To her, that’s ageist and sexist, and she’s not wrong. (The detractors who called her old and irrelevant for performing at the Grammys in a revealing ensemble piped down when Paul McCartney took the stage later in the show.) Moreover, her work is as exciting as ever, with features from Kanye West and Nicki Minaj and production from tunesmiths like Diplo and the Swedish dance-music wunderkind Avicii.

Rebel Heart has songs with shades of vulnerability, like the drug-addled “Devil Pray” and “Joan of Arc,” an emotional meditation on her fraught relationship with the media: “I don’t want to talk about it right now/ Just hold me while I cry my eyes out,” she sings plaintively.

But if there’s a mission statement, it’s the

exhilarating “Bitch I’m Madonna,” a bonkers dance track that starts off candy-sweet, then drops a squelchy bass line under an infernally catchy refrain: “We go hard or we go home,/ we gon’ do this all night long/ We get freaky if you want,/ bitch I’m Madonna.” If those lyrics sound risibly juvenile, that’s why they’re so clever: it’s a song about how her adolescent antics are the stuff of legend. Later on, she sings, “Who do you think you are? You can’t miss this lucky star.” The young fans tuning in to hear Minaj rapping on the bridge might miss the reference to Madonna’s 1983 song “Lucky Star”—part of a double-sided single, with “Holiday,” that was Madonna’s first No. 1 among the 173 hits she’s notched across all *Billboard* charts in her career—but her grownup fans will get it. Diplo calls it his favorite song on the record. “It makes her the icon that she is,” he says.

That message comes through loud and clear. Elsewhere on the album, there’s a dissonant club thumper called “Iconic” and another called “Veni Vidi Vici.” But she’s earned the right to remind listeners of her extraordinary run. She hasn’t always gotten headlines for her artistry, but for her, it’s still about the music.

“My goal when I started this record was to focus on songwriting, without any special effects, without any musical direction, without production in my mind—just simple songwriting,” she says. “So if I wanted to, I could sit down with a piano or guitar and perform it, and it would still be just as powerful.”

She can do that if she wants. But if history is any indication, she’ll probably opt for the fireworks. ■



**If You Bought an Airline Ticket between
the U.S. and Asia, Australia,
New Zealand, or the Pacific Islands,**

***You Could Receive Benefits from
Class Action Settlements***

Settlements have been reached with eight airlines in a class action lawsuit involving the price of airline tickets. The Settling Defendants are: Air France; Cathay Pacific; Japan Airlines; Malaysian Airlines; Qantas; Singapore Airlines; Thai Airways; and Vietnam Airlines.

The lawsuit continues against five Non-Settling Defendant airlines: Air New Zealand; All Nippon Airways ("ANA"); China Airlines (Taiwan); EVA Airways; and Philippines Airlines.

What is the case about?

The lawsuit claims that the Defendants agreed to fix prices on tickets for transpacific air travel. As a result, ticket purchasers may have paid more than was necessary. The Settling Defendants deny the allegations, and deny that they have any liability. The Defendant airlines also deny liability, although ANA has pled guilty to fixing the prices of certain discounted tickets.

Am I included?

You are included if: (1) you bought a ticket for air travel from one of 26 airlines; (2) the ticket included at least one flight segment between the U.S. and Asia or Oceania; and (3) your purchase was made between January 1, 2000 and the present. A more complete description of eligibility requirements is available at the website or by calling the toll-free number.

What do the Settlements provide?

The Settling Defendants have agreed to pay \$39,502,000 (the "Settlement Fund"). Money will not be distributed yet, and will be distributed pursuant to a Plan of Allocation approved by the Court. Additional information is available on the website below. Class Counsel will pursue the lawsuit against the Non-Settling Defendants.

Class Counsel have not requested attorneys' fees and reimbursement of costs at this time but will do so in connection with the final approval hearing. For the current Settlements, Class Counsel will request up to one-third of the Settlement Fund plus up to \$7,500 for each of the class representatives. Class Counsel has asked the Court to set aside an additional \$3 million of the Settlement Fund to cover future expenses.

How can I get benefits?

Submit a Claim Form online or by mail. The earliest deadline to file a claim is **September 19, 2015**, but you will have until 120 days after the Settlements become final and effective to file your claim.

What are my rights?

If you do nothing, you will be bound by the Settlements and the Court's decisions. If you want to keep your right to sue the Settling Defendants you must exclude yourself from the classes by **April 17, 2015**. If you stay in the classes, you may object to the Settlements by **April 17, 2015**. The Court will hold a hearing on **May 22, 2015** to consider whether to approve the Settlements. You or your own lawyer may appear at the hearing at your own expense, but you do not have to attend.

Please visit the website, www.AirlineSettlement.com for additional information, important documents, and case updates.

For more information: 1-800-439-1781
www.AirlineSettlement.com

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THEATER

Fish Out of Water

Broadway's buzziest new production isn't about a steamy cabaret or the Mormon church—it's about sitting shivah with a curmudgeon. *Seinfeld* co-creator and *Curb Your Enthusiasm* star **Larry David** will make his Broadway debut on March 5 in *Fish in*



David, left, and
Ben Shenkman
in a scene from
Fish in the Dark

the Dark, a play he wrote about a family mourning the death of its patriarch. Since David has already conquered both network and cable television, it's no surprise that his first show has broken nonmusical Broadway records with \$14.5 million in advance ticket sales. Even Jason Alexander—who played David's alter ego, George Costanza, on *Seinfeld*—tweeted that he couldn't get seats.

MOVIES

Monkey Business

Before he stars in the next installment of *True Detective*, **Vince Vaughn** will appear in the comedy *Unfinished Business*, about a wild business trip to Europe, in theaters March 6.



MUSIC

Chasing Oasis

Noel Gallagher has said that it would take \$500 million to reunite his acclaimed rock band Oasis. While waiting for someone to raise that cash, hear his second solo album, *Chasing Yesterday*, out March 2.



TELEVISION

British Invasion

The first season of the British drama *Broadchurch*, about the disappearance of a young boy, developed a cult following in the U.S. Now state-side fans can catch the second season on BBC America starting March 4.



By Eliana Dockterman

The Return of the King

The author of *Never Let Me Go* comes back with an Arthurian epic

By Lev Grossman

KAZUO ISHIGURO HAS SPENT A LOT OF TIME IN cold wet fields today. Photographers like to put him there because it makes him look thoughtful and profound, and also because, in fairness, a lot of his new book *The Buried Giant* does take place in cold wet fields. “They take photographs outside in the English winter, in some kind of heath or something like that,” he says. “I’m going to write a very indoors book next time. Warm cafés.”

Ishiguro himself is a surprisingly warm and funny conversationalist—surprisingly given the persistent strain of existential bleakness that runs through his work, and his prose style, which tends to eschew humor and showy cleverness in favor of a direct, plainspoken tone. Ishiguro was born in Japan, but his family emigrated to England when he was 5, after his father took a job there as an oceanographer. Ishiguro’s first ambition was to be a singer-songwriter, a career at which he failed comprehensively. But when he switched to writing, success came rapidly. He won the Whitbread prize for his second novel, *An Artist of the Floating World*, and his third, *The Remains of the Day*, won him the Booker and was made into a film starring Anthony Hopkins and Emma Thompson.

But it’s been 10 years since his last novel, the stunning *Never Let Me Go*, which also became a movie. “I couldn’t get started,” he says, speaking by phone from his home in London. “I just couldn’t get a story to fit the questions I wanted to deal with.” Those questions were of a different order from the ones he asked in his earlier books. In the past, he focused on individual experiences, but now he wanted to look at the behavior of societies as a whole.

Specifically, he was interested in memory, and the role that collective remembering and forgetting plays in the ways societies recover after catastrophes. He mentions Germany, the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, South Africa—places where people did terrible things to one another and then had to learn how to live together afterward, side by side. How does a community move past that? “When is it better for a society to just agree to forget some bad things, so they don’t disintegrate into civil war or disorder or chaos?” he asks. “And when is it necessary to go back and really examine the seeds of things that are going wrong?”

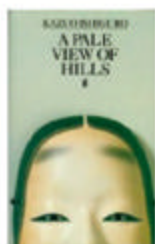
Ishiguro didn’t want to tell this story in any country in particular. “I thought that as a novelist, that’s not really what I was about,” he says. “I wanted to take a little step back from these specific cases and try and look at this in a slightly more abstract or slightly more metaphorical level.” He hit on the solution while reading, improbably enough, the 14th century English poem *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. “There’s a picture of what Britain was like at that point, and it was a hell of a place,” he says. “There weren’t any inns or anything like that, so he had to sleep on rocks—I don’t know why he had to sleep on rocks, but it says he had to sleep on rocks. And there’s a very casual line in there where it says, ‘And he would be chased out of villages by panting ogres.’ This little glimpse of Britain at that point, it really sparked something in me. I thought, Oh, that’s a fun place. Maybe that’s a good landscape to put my story in. Ogres and all.” Ishiguro took a sudden swerve into science fiction with *Never Let Me Go*; now, equally unexpectedly, he has crossed the aisle into the fantasy section.



Dungeons and dragons For the scenes involving knights and sword-play, Ishiguro drew on his childhood love of samurai manga and westerns



Memory, Loss. For Ishiguro's characters, the present is always informed by their pasts



A PALE VIEW OF HILLS (1982)

A widow living in England recalls her childhood in Nagasaki while coming to grips with her daughter's suicide



AN ARTIST OF THE FLOATING WORLD (1986)

After national defeat in World War II, a gifted Japanese propaganda artist reflects on his culpability



THE REMAINS OF THE DAY (1989)

An English butler looks back on his long career, which found him working in service of outdated ideals



NEVER LET ME GO (2005)

Three students learn that they have been bred as organ-donor clones and strive to defer their inevitable fates

No one saw it coming, but wrong-footing readers is part of Ishiguro's modus operandi. *The Buried Giant* is set in a misty, primordial England populated by feuding Saxons and Britons and haunted by traces of a great age just gone by: the ruins of the collapsing Roman Empire and the shadow of the late King Arthur, a few of whose sworn knights still roam the landscape in rusty armor. "You would have searched a long time for the sort of winding lane or tranquil meadow for which England later became celebrated," Ishiguro writes (it's the book's first line). "There were instead miles of desolate, uncultivated land; here and there rough-hewn paths over craggy hills or bleak moorland." This is a disenchanted landscape, not so much Arthurian as post-Arthurian: we are far from Camelot here.

The plot of *The Buried Giant* follows two elderly Britons, Axl and Beatrice, who have left their village to look for their son, who lives a few days' walk away. At least they think he does. Lately, a strange enchantment has been clouding everyone's memories, making even the recent past vague and uncertain. No one knows where it came from. "Perhaps God's so deeply ashamed of us, of something we did, that he's wishing himself to forget," Beatrice says. "When God won't remember, it's no wonder we're unable to do so." Step by step the couple's journey to their son becomes a search for those missing memories, and for the source of this strange mental mist. (The titular giant appears only once, early on, an ominous earthen mound that no one dares to disturb.)

As generally happens in Arthurian quests, a noble band assembles around Axl and Beatrice, including a hyper-competent Saxon warrior, a teenage outcast with a ghastly secret and Sir Gawain himself, touchy and past his prime but

still formidable. He keeps a straight face, but Ishiguro has fun with the swords and sorcery: he's a lifelong fan of samurai manga and westerns, and some of the action has the feel of a classic showdown scored by Ennio Morricone. "Gawain has some echoes of a certain kind of aging lonely gunfighter or samurai," Ishiguro says. "That figure of the solitary rider and horse, caught in a wide landscape. Like the beginning of *The Searchers*."

Ishiguro works this fantastical material with the tools of a master realist. When the characters encounter a monster by moonlight, Ishiguro describes it with a dispassionate, anatomical precision that makes us feel its sheer grotesque *monstrosity* with a force and freshness that have been leached away by legions of computer-generated orcs: "They might have been gazing at a large skinned animal: an opaque membrane, like the lining of a sheep's stomach, was stretched tightly over the sinews and joints. Swathed as it was now in moonshadow, the beast appeared roughly the size and shape of a bull, but its head was distinctly wolf-like and of a darker hue—though even here the impression was of blackening by flames rather than of naturally dark fur or flesh." Monsters often appear in literature as pallid metaphors. This one demands to be taken literally.

The closer Axl and Beatrice get to the source of the memory enchantment, the more our sense of triumphant

anticipation is invaded by a creeping dread of what it might be concealing. If their memories come back, what will they remember? What would Axl and Beatrice learn about their ostensibly happy marriage? What would they learn about their own identities? (There are hints early on that Axl is more than he seems, or knows—there's a whiff of Jason Bourne about him.) Likewise, the Saxons and Britons coexist uneasily but peacefully, but what might they have done to one another in the past? Is there a history of violence here, a cycle of vengeance that the mist of forgetfulness has temporarily paused? Maybe the forgetting isn't a curse but a blessing. Visiting a monastery, the Saxon warrior perceives that it must originally have been built as an armed fortress. "This is today a place of peace and prayer," he says, "yet you needn't gaze so deep to find blood and terror." As a species humans need to remember, but they also need, desperately, to forget, both as people and as communities, and those twin needs are finely, precariously balanced.

All this Ishiguro relates to us bluntly and plainly, almost willfully so, as if to do otherwise would be to distort the truth with the sparkly Instagram filter of eloquence. "I'm a kind of plain writer—that's always my style," he says. It fits the material. If at first Ishiguro's language sounds flat and unadorned, it's that very flatness that makes you wonder what's buried underneath. It's a voice he found before he ever started writing, back when he was still a singer-songwriter. "I'd gone through various ways of writing songs, and I ended up with something that was quite plain on the surface," he says. "The emotions would be there, but they'll be slightly obliquely there, in the words themselves. People have to feel it between the lines."

As a species humans need to remember, but they also need, desperately, to forget

Movies



Star Turn. David Cronenberg's new film shows an Oscar winner's untamed side

By Daniel D'Addario

IF OSCARS WERE HANDED OUT FOR EXERCITION, Julianne Moore would have just picked one up—not for her exquisitely controlled performance in *Still Alice* but for the far wilder *Maps to the Stars*. Moore won the Best Actress Oscar and wide acclaim for her tasteful role as an Alzheimer's sufferer, but she shows off a taste for mania in director David Cronenberg's new film, which, after an awards-qualifying run last year, opens nationally Feb. 27. The star plays a perpetually panicked actor whose bad behavior includes celebrating a competitor's tragic misfortune with a dance to "Na Na Hey Hey Kiss Him Goodbye." It's the latest iteration of an established pattern: Cronenberg showing us a familiar performer's dark side.

The Canadian director, 71, has spent an entire career working outside the Hollywood system (*Maps to the Stars* is the first film he has shot partly within the U.S.) and has elicited defining performances from several stars by moving them past

the recognizable. "Once you're on set with the actor," Cronenberg says, "it's as if you've never seen this person before."

Moore, whose work in *Maps* won her the Best Actress prize at the Cannes Film Festival last year, is untethered from her past personas and from reality. Her character, Havana Segrand, is a second-generation actor desperate to land the leading role in a remake of her late mother's signature film, all while being haunted by her mother's ghost (played by Sarah Gadon). Havana's frantic mental state reflects the precariousness of

Cronenberg, who began his career in horror, is the go-to director for stars who want to push themselves

Dark matter Cronenberg, with camera lens, says Moore was game for risky scenes: "It wasn't even a discussion. There's no holding back. She is that character."

her fame. "After the age of 40, they're gone," Cronenberg says of actresses in mainstream cinema. "The phone stops ringing. And for them, it's kind of a pre-death." (Moore is an exception: her win at the Oscars made her one of just two women in their 50s ever to be named Best Actress.)

Cronenberg, who began his career in horror, with creature features like *Shivers* and *The Fly*, is the go-to director for stars who want to push themselves almost too far. He turned Viggo Mortensen into a terse Russian gangster, a role that earned him an Oscar nomination, in *Eastern Promises* (2007) and took Keira Knightley to the brink of madness onscreen in *A Dangerous Method* (2011). But for all the accolades he's brought his actors, Cronenberg has stayed out of the limelight. The director, who turned down opportunities to direct *Flashdance* and *Top Gun*, has lived in Toronto his entire life. In Canada, he says, "you're not in the flood. You're in a creek coming off the flood."

Saturday Night Live producer Lorne Michaels and *Ghostbusters* director Ivan Reitman were among Cronenberg's friends in the 1970s Toronto scene, and both eventually found massive success by heading south. But staying outside Hollywood has allowed Cronenberg something perhaps more precious—the ability to indulge his taste for extremity and to amass a cult of fans while doing so. Those fans include Josh Trank, the director of the forthcoming adaptation of *Fantastic Four*, who has said his film will be influenced by Cronenberg's themes. Cronenberg is unimpressed. Comic-book films, he says, are "very limited as to what they can say as creative endeavors."

With *Maps to the Stars*, Cronenberg has proved his mastery at shifting between horror, social commentary and a laugh or two. The Oscars may not have honored *Maps*, but Moore's hairpin turns between emotions will endure. "I like it," the director says, "when all the tones you've put out there are heard, and heard the way they should be." ■

The Oscar Mire

Or, Why does Hollywood hate itself?

By Richard Corliss

IT'S FINALLY OVER. WE MEAN BOTH THE Oscar telecast, which ran as long as *Gone With the Wind* (though with fewer important roles for African Americans), and the three-month death march of critics' citations, guild awards and expert speculation on who'd win. In case you nodded off, *Birdman* took Best Picture and Director, and the acting prizes went to Eddie Redmayne for *The Theory of Everything*, Julianne Moore for *Still Alice*, J.K. Simmons for *Whiplash* and Patricia Arquette for *Boyhood*—four folks whom most people know from the speeches they gave, not the movies they were in.

This year's Oscar show, which attracted 37.3 million total viewers, was the highest-rated entertainment program (non-football) since last year's. But it's also the least watched Oscars since 2009, when *Shumdog Millionaire* won Best Picture and the year's most popular film, *The Dark Knight*, was not even nominated for the top prize. The solons of the Motion Picture Academy took quick, bold action, expanding the Best Picture slot from five nominees to a possible 10, hoping to allow for the inclusion of a few megahits as serious contenders, if not ultimately winners. The following year, when *Avatar*, the century's biggest smash, duked it out with *The Hurt Locker*, viewership rose by 5 million.

This year, the only big hit among the eight Best Picture finalists was *American Sniper*. The other seven were art-house films—exemplary, to be sure—that mimicked the low-budget Independent Spirit Awards. (Oscar host Neil Patrick Harris called Sunday night's slate “the Dependent Spirit Awards.”) You see, there is Hollywood, which makes movies the whole world watches, and there is off-Hollywood, which hatches the films that get Oscars. Somebody has to ask: Why does Hollywood hate what it does for a living?

It can't be as simple as “films” are great



The four acting winners all starred in art-house faves with a limited audience

and “movies” are dreck. On the Rotten Tomatoes website, which tabulates the reviews of dozens of critics, *Birdman* pulled a 93 rating (out of 100) and *The Imitation Game* an 89. But some popular hits also scored with the critics: 91 for *Guardians of the Galaxy*, 89 for its Marvel sibling *Captain America: The Winter Soldier*, 88 for *Gone Girl* and a stratospheric 96 for *The Lego Movie*. Audiences liked these four films too, paying more than \$1 billion to see them in North American theaters (plus another \$1.3 billion abroad).

So why weren't at least a couple of these films nominated for Best Picture? Maybe simply because they were popular. They got their awards as cash prizes, not statuettes. The Oscar winners have become a niche category of little films about big diseases. Another disconnect between Oscar voters and moviegoers: age. The average age of

the 6,700 Academy members is about 60, and they see most of the nominated films on screeners at home, like your parents with Netflix. Basically, they want movies to be television: edifying, intimate dramas. The stories they respond to are not of youngsters on grand quests—the action-film template—but of unsung heroes battling infirmities and encroaching death.

Hence the Oscars to Redmayne and Moore. The actor played by Keaton in *Birdman* and the teacher played by Simmons are failed artists, both of Academy-voter median age, who take out their career frustrations on their colleagues and students. That's a powerful narrative, but it's just one of dozens that can inspire terrific films worthy of Oscar attention.

The very first Oscar party, in 1929, had two Best Picture categories: one for “outstanding picture” (William Wellman's aerial spectacle *Wings*), the other for “unique and artistic picture” (F.W. Murnau's masterpiece *Sunrise*). Maybe the Academy, obsessed with indie artistry, should return to the double award. Then *Avatar* could win along with *The Hurt Locker*, and *Gravity* with *12 Years a Slave*. Next year, even the new *Star Wars* might have a shot. ■


A big-budget category might give films like *Guardians of the Galaxy* Oscar hopes



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Art

The Royal Treatment Kehinde Wiley's street-chic update of the Old Masters

By Richard Lacayo

THE CHIEF LESSON OF “KEHINDE WILEY: A NEW Republic,” an almost phosphorescent career-length survey at the Brooklyn Museum through May 24, is that while Wiley may be something of a one-trick pony, it's a considerable trick, enlightening and ingenious, often moving and always intriguing. Wiley, 37, arrived at his basic strategy in 2001, not long after getting his M.F.A. from Yale. Recruiting young African-American men off the street in Harlem, he would invite them to leaf through art books at his studio and choose a pose from an Old Master painting. He would photograph them in that posture but costumed in the latest street gear, and then use that shot as the basis for a large photo-realist painting that carried the title of the earlier canvas.

The result? Canny pictures that are a kind of conceptual art with multiple conceptions at work. They flood the zone of Western art with images of black men—people mostly excluded from the canons—while pulling the conventions of older art abruptly into the present. As a final layer of art-historical wild style, Wiley places the men against, and sometimes within, teeming patterned backgrounds drawn from Victorian wallpaper, Rococo filigree and other sources. Or more recently, from the image banks of China, Africa and other locales where he has worked.

Like many portraitists of the past, Wiley is less interested in the personal psychology of his models than in their public masks—how they offer themselves to the world, what they wear, how they “present.” His best paintings draw a line that connects, say, Renaissance bling and 21st century street swagger. They also fluctuate shrewdly between postmodern irony, outright comedy and absolute sincerity. And they do all this while reviving some of the sensory pleasures of classical portraiture, like skillful illusion and rich costuming—which, if you wear them right, turns out to be a perfectly good way to describe camo pants and unlaced Timberlands.

Although Wiley has branched out over time, applying his formula to portraits of women and lately to bronze busts and works in stained glass, after almost 14 years it may be time for a new strategy. Meanwhile, the Brooklyn show, which will move to Fort Worth, Seattle and Richmond, Va., is proof that one trick can be performed in all kinds of satisfying ways. ■





OVER THE TOP

Jacques-Louis David's famous equestrian portrait from 1801, *Napoleon Crossing the Alps*, near left, is a quintessential image of power in full regalia. So is Wiley's 2005 rethinking of it, *Napoleon Leading the Army Over the Alps*, at far left. But Wiley's picture also draws attention to the semi-camp theatricality of David's original and its almost comically windblown machismo.



ROLE MODELS

In 2012, Wiley made his first series of portraits featuring women, who wore gowns designed by Riccardo Tisci. *The Two Sisters*, above left, is derived from *The Two Sisters*, above right, an 1843 double portrait by Théodore Chassériau. *Willem van Heythuysen*, below right, refers to a 1625 portrait of that name by Frans Hals, below left. The 17th century van Heythuysen was from Haarlem, in the Netherlands. His 21st century spiritual descendant was from Harlem, in Manhattan.



Reviews

Smith and Robbie are caught up in a game of who's conning whom



MOVIES

Will Smith's Charming Con. He's a smooth scoundrel in the heist comedy *Focus*

By Richard Corliss

"I CAN CONVINCE ANYONE OF ANYTHING," SAYS Nicky Spurgeon in *Focus*, and since he's played by Will Smith, the man is not boasting. The con in con man is short for confidence: what he radiates, and what he extracts from his marks before fleecing them. The blithe smile, the easy authority: that's Smith since his Fresh Prince days.

What's odd is that in most of his movies—from the time he sauntered into action stardom with *Independence Day*, through a decade of dystopian sci-fi roles in *I, Robot*; *I Am Legend*; *Hancock*; and the misfortune known as *After Earth*—he's been obliged to glower, macho-man-style, as if Bruce Willis hadn't already patented the stoic scowl. So writer-directors Glenn Ficarra and John Requa have to be credited with a little wisdom in letting Smith be Smith in *Focus*, the star's first charm barrage since the 2005 *Hitch*.

Nicky runs a con outfit of 20 or so filchers who work casinos, racetracks, football games—any place where cocky rich guys can be separated from their loot. He's on hiatus when he meets the creamy blonde Jess Barrett (*The Wolf of Wall Street*'s Margot Robbie), who pulls a clumsy ruse that he plays along with simply

from professional curiosity. Out of her league but a quick study, Jess learns to pick the pockets of smitten strangers and earns her bona fides. She's now ready to be Nicky's partner, and perhaps rival, in con.

The dapper-con genre, which includes *The Lady Eve* and *The Sting*, with a brief recent revival in *Now You See Me*, demands of its audience only that it fall for the flimflam, as Nicky's marks do. The big gamble in *Focus*: it's a Will Smith movie that dares to be small. It leads its stars into glamorous peril with a zillionaire gambler (B.D. Wong) and an Argentine race-car mogul (Rodrigo Santoro) in games where no one can be trusted.

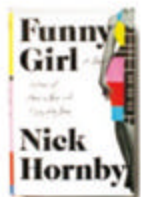
Ficarra and Requa, who pulled off a more brazen act of sex and treachery in *I Love You Phillip Morris*, here just want to have and provide a good time. Which they do. They'll even take an R rating for the fun of some raunchy wit spouted by one of Nicky's pals (Adrian Martinez). Robbie, who suggests a high-end knockoff of the young Michelle Pfeiffer, adds to the film's genial sense that everything, including star quality, is a con.

Except for Smith. He's still the real deal.

BOOKS

Unromantic Comedy

If you've read Nick Hornby—he wrote *About a Boy* and the iconic *High Fidelity*, among other novels—then you'll recognize his voice right away: affable, funny, light but with a signature wistfulness. It's back for the first time in five years in *Funny Girl*, telling the story of Barbara, who in 1964 leaves her hometown of Blackpool, England (where she was, briefly and reluctantly, Miss Blackpool), for London. She's obsessed with becoming the next Lucille Ball. "It was," she thinks, "a bit like being religious." And surprisingly quickly, even to her, she does, as the star of a wildly popular sitcom called *Barbara (and Jim)*. (The parentheses are a bone of contention with her co-star.) It sounds more like a happy ending than the beginning of a novel, but Hornby leads with it because he's more interested in the long aftermath of success: the complicated compromises it entails, the private sacrifices it demands, the inevitable anticlimaxes that follow it. *Funny Girl* isn't a profound book—Hornby isn't geared for high drama—but it has a lot in common with *Barbara (and Jim)* at its best: "It was fast, funny, and real." —LEV GROSSMAN



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Tech

Inbox Zero Office- collaboration tools want to reshape the workplace

By Jack Linshi

FROM OVERWHELMING EMAIL THREADS TO bad PowerPoint presentations, workplace communication has needed a makeover for a long time. Many have tried and failed—including Google's much heralded office software Wave, which shut down in 2012. Now San Francisco-based startup Slack is bringing a new approach—and fans as well as tech experts say it may have cracked the code.

Unlike its predecessors, Slack melds chat and search in a dead-simple interface, helping it gain a half-million users in just a year. That's "what gets people over the hump," explains Forrester analyst TJ Keitt. Slack is free for a basic version but charges for advanced features.

Slack is one of many apps vying for a share of the \$4.7 billion-a-year office-software market. Yammer, acquired by Microsoft in 2012, lets workers collaborate on presentations. Another startup, Convo, aims to revamp email by sorting data on the basis of relevance to your projects, not message history. And FB@Work, unveiled in January, is a version of Facebook specifically tailored to the office.

Of course, offices can be slow to evolve, with managers hesitant to abandon tried-if-tired email systems. And employees may be reluctant to change their familiar workflow. Once they try something new, however, they might like what they find.

HOW NEW WORK SOFTWARE CHANGES ...



MESSAGING

Slack can help you host chats with either a single colleague or an entire team—an alternative to endless email threads.



INFORMATION SHARING

FB@Work uses Facebook's algorithms to display relevant information about projects, news or company updates an employee might have missed. It's still in early testing.



FILE SHARING

Yammer is integrated with Microsoft Office 365, which lets users have group conversations with co-workers in Word, Excel and PowerPoint documents.



MOBILE PRODUCTIVITY

Convo's mobile app can auto-zoom to the exact line of a document flagged by a colleague, making it easier to work with files on phones.



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PHOTO: DARCY KIEFEL

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Pop Chart

LOVE IT

▲ **Pizza Hut released a limited-edition line of nail polish** featuring colors such as Say Cheese and Meat Me After Midnight.



▲ **Christina Aguilera broke out a spot-on Britney Spears impression** on *The Tonight Show With Jimmy Fallon*.

▲ **Will Arnett cameoed as Batman** during the performance of *Lego Movie* anthem "Everything Is Awesome" at the Oscars.

▲ The police department in Harlan, Ky., jokingly **blamed frigid weather on Elsa from Frozen** and took out a "warrant" for the snow princess's arrest.



POP ART Now 100 years old, the Coca-Cola bottle isn't just an iconic consumer good; it has also been an inspiration for some of America's greatest artists. A new exhibition at Atlanta's High Museum of Art celebrates the bottle's place in pop culture with works from Andy Warhol (like 1962's *Three Coke Bottles*, right) and photographers Walker Evans and William Christenberry. It runs Feb. 28–Oct. 4.



VERBATIM

'The Internet is the ugliest reflection of mankind there is.'

IGGY AZALEA, rap artist, announcing a departure from social media (via Twitter) after a series of feuds and instances of body-shaming

THE DIGITS

\$8.8 million



Amount raised on Kickstarter for the absurdist card game *Exploding Kittens*, far surpassing the \$10,000 goal. The cash came from 219,382 individual donors, an all-time record.

QUICK TALK Kal Penn

The 37-year-old former *House* star swaps the lab coat for a detective's badge in *Battle Creek*, debuting March 1 on CBS.

—NOLAN FEENEY

You rode around with real Battle Creek, Mich., cops to prepare for this role. What did you learn?

I saw the things that make better television—so, raiding houses or pulling people over—but also the more banal aspects of police work: what happens when you're sitting in your office for five hours doing paperwork. **Sounds thrilling.** The most surprising thing was the way of officers were treating their suspects with respect. With the national narrative that's happening police-wise, that's not often something you get to see. **With *Breaking***



Bad mastermind Vince Gilligan serving as a co-creator, I bet there are some unusual murder cases. One episode takes place at the annual Cereal Festival, which is a real thing in Battle Creek. What could go wrong when everyone's celebrating breakfast? **Someone gets drowned in a giant cereal bowl?** That would probably happen on a Comedy Central version of our show. **You recently accompanied President Obama on a trip to India. How's *Air Force One*?** I've been going to India since I was kid, and the President's plane *definitely* beats sitting in a middle seat with a neck pillow. **Are you fist-bump buddies with Obama yet? You did spend two years working in the White House.** He's exactly what you see on TV—that gregarious side, the ability to shake off things that shouldn't weigh you down. The fist bumps are definitely part of that.

CHART- WORK

Game On!

Settlers of Catan could be getting the Hollywood treatment now that producer Gail Katz (*The Perfect Storm*) has acquired rights to its story. How will it fare? Here are five other big-screen board-game adaptations, from least to most successful.

BATTLESHIP

Despite the massive budget (north of \$200 million) and star power (Liam Neeson, Rihanna), 2012's *Battleship* brought in just \$65 million at the domestic box office and was widely panned by critics. Sniped one: "It's loud, it's large, it's stupid, and its best gag involves a chicken burrito."



CANDY LAND

Most people probably don't even know that *Candy Land: The Great Lollipop Adventure* even exists, seeing as the 57-minute animated movie went straight to DVD in 2005.



CLUE

The original board game turned movie (starring Christopher Lloyd, among others) flopped at the box office in 1985. But it went on to become a cult classic, thanks to video rentals and frequent showings on cable TV.



OUIJA

Stiles White's 2014 adaptation wasn't loved by critics, but audiences felt otherwise: *Ouija* earned roughly \$50 million at the domestic box office, well above its \$5 million budget.



JUMANJI

The 1995 Robin Williams film was based on a book, but concurrent with its success—over \$100 million at the U.S. box office—Milton Bradley made its faux game real.



FACE TIME Frida Kahlo is best known for her self-portraits—like *Self Portrait in a Red and Gold Dress, 1941*, above—but these paintings were more than depictions of individual beauty. An exhibit at the NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale explores their political context, alongside works by her husband Diego Rivera and other notable Mexican artists. It runs until May 31.

LEAVE IT

Shipments of **Girl Scout cookies have been delayed** by the soaring demand for Thin Mints.



According to calculations on Jezebel, **Kim Kardashian's daily makeup routine** requires products totaling \$1,977.75.

A Connecticut man was arrested after throwing a **tantrum in a hair salon**; reportedly, he wasn't happy with his \$50 haircut.



Jason Biggs revealed that he won't be on the new season of *Orange Is the New Black*.

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May I Fetch You Some Flavonoids?

As a concierge at a tony L.A. hotel, I test my ability to please the 1%



WHILE EVERYONE ELSE whines about income inequality, I'm doing something about it: learning how to kiss up to the 1%. Just as our ancestors searched for holy grails and husbanded falcons for royalty, I'm going to cater to the desires of billionaires, which seems to mostly involve making political ads and pressing juice.

To practice serving the superwealthy, I spent a day working as a concierge at the Peninsula Beverly Hills on the Saturday before the Grammy Awards. The Peninsula handles much of the Establishment before awards shows since it's known for being discreet, with a secret back entrance leading directly to some villas, and for extraordinarily personalized service, including monogrammed pillowcases for repeat guests, thereby bringing order to the chaos of the post-Oscar pillow fights that plague other hotels.

I snapped a name tag onto my suit

pocket and arrived at the daily 8:30 a.m. meeting, which began with the insanely charming managing director, Offer Nissenbaum, handing each of the 14 department heads a list of the 36 guests checking in that day. Several were famous, many were CEOs, two were paying \$9,500 a night, and one was checking in for his 149th time. We were told to offer our congratulations to people who had been nominated for a Grammy, won the Super Bowl or recently gotten a promotion. I thought a blanket "Congratulations on being able to spend \$9,500 on a hotel room" would save us a lot of trouble trying to memorize stuff, but that didn't fit Nissenbaum's vibe.

His vibe, it turns out, is way more NSA. He has a file on everyone who has ever stayed at the hotel over the past eight years. One guest checking in had slow room service six years ago, which will definitely not happen again. There are also a lot of people referred to as "sensitive guests," which I'm pretty sure means

"total jerks." One does not like the toilet seat closed. Another will take complimentary rides in the hotel's Rolls-Royce but not the Mercedes. And one woman, believe it or not, demanded to be addressed as Her Royal Highness, though in fairness, she was actual royalty.

Before my shift, I asked head concierge James Little—this year's L.A. Concierge of the Year—what to do if a guest asks me for something illegal, like prostitutes. Little recommended saying, nonjudgmentally, "We just can't do that because we can't guarantee the quality of the experience." He will, however, agree to get just about anything legal. He flew to London to fetch a long-term guest's dog for her, in order to save her the expense of chartering a jet for her pet. She was so grateful, she flew him business class and put him up for a week so he could see England for the first time. Rich people have no idea about basic stuff, like the fact that dog fetchers fly economy.

When I started my night shift, I quickly noticed that truly powerful and famous people don't ask for much. That's because they have assistants. And competence. I also noticed that rich people, like the rest

of us, don't make reservations until the last minute and have the same horrible taste as nonrich people. They like steak restaurants, nightclubs with hot girls and drinks that involve Red Bull; we are heading toward a world with regular Red Bull and Premier Cru Red Bull.

Still, I was impressed at some of the ingenious ways they came up with to waste money. One woman had us send flowers to the restaurant Spago for her table's centerpiece. Little had no problem delivering that. He said the algorithm of service is contacts, money and time, and that with two of those, he could get anything done. My algorithm was more like, How much do I hate the guest? How lazy do I feel? And, Did they tip me? When I had all three of those, I asked Little to handle it.

We even helped people who weren't staying at the hotel. I went to Whole Foods for a woman in Australia who often stays at the Peninsula and is unable to locally source soy isoflavones, which are a real thing that people at Whole Foods not only know about but told me aren't big anymore. When I returned, international tax attorney Leslie Schreyer and his very attractive wife Judy stopped by the concierge desk to chat, and she told me she has called the hotel from her New York City apartment to buy boots she couldn't find. When the Alexander McQueen store in Manhattan couldn't find a mink coat in her size, she asked a Peninsula concierge for help during a stay. "By the time one of the concierges here found it, it was on sale, so the joke was on them," she said. I'm pretty sure the joke was less on Alexander McQueen than on Karl Marx.

At the end of the night, despite the fact that I had offloaded most of my non-flavonoid tasks onto him, Little said I would make a great concierge. I kept my cool and bantered with guests, and have useful connections, admittedly largely at Whole Foods. When the Great Inequity comes, I will be prepared to serve. My first question is going to be whether people miss their dogs.



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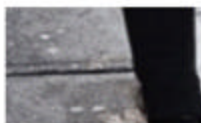
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